PEARLS FROM THE OCEAN

REV. J. SMITH

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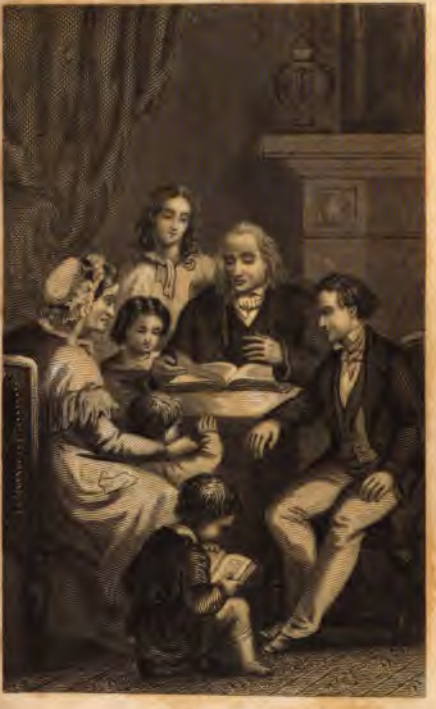
OR,

WEALTH FOR SOULS.

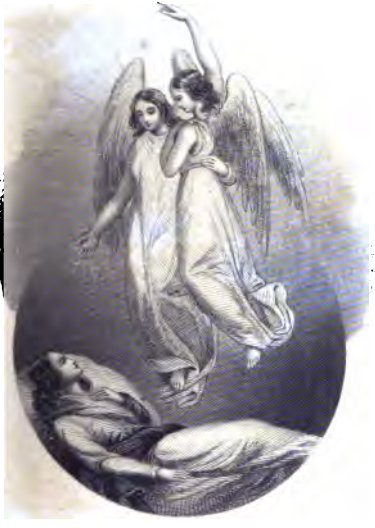


FAMILY WORSHIP.

PEARLS FROM THE OCEAN

By the

Revd JAMES SMITH CHELTENHAM



HALIFAX:
MILNER & SOWERBY.
SIMPKIN. MARSHALL & Co LONDON.

PEARLS FROM THE OCEAN;

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BY

JAMES SMITH,

CHELTENHAM;

AUTHOR OF

"EARLY AND LATTER RAIN;"
"GOOD SEED FOR THE LORD'S FIELD;"
"BREAD FROM HEAVEN;"
"SUNNY SUBJECTS FOR ALL SEASONS;"
"LIGHT FOR DARK DAYS;"
"A BOOK YOU WILL LIKE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

The word of God may well be compared to the ocean, for its vastness, its usefulness, and its wealth. No one can guess at the amount of wealth which the ocean contains; yet that would be much easier, than to guess at the amount of the unsearchable riches of Christ, contained in God's word. The design of every really good book, is to lead to the Bible; from thence its contents are extracted, and back to its source it leads. I have stood on the shore of the ocean of truth, and at times have been led into a few of its depths, where I have found treasure, which has enriched me; and as I think it is likely to enrich others, I have put a part of it into this little casket, and send it forth in hope that God will make it a blessing.

Christ is the great, the priceless pearl of Holy Scripture, and he that finds this pearl is rich indeed, though he part with all he has to obtain it. The promises and invitations of the Bible, are precious pearls too, they enrich and adorn the mind. Indeed every separate truth is a separate pearl, each one costly beyond description. I have endeavoured to string a few together, and

now send them forth for the benefit of others. The casket will cost but a mere trifle, the pearls are not sold, but given; they are without money and without price. Every promise, every warning, every invitation, and every exhortation is free; the free gifts of a gracious God.

Reader, this little book is intended to lead you to Christ, to endear Christ to you, and make you happy in the love of Christ. Every part savours of his most precious name, which name is as ointment poured forth. If it does not lead you to Christ, and render Christ more precious to you, it will not accomplish the writer's object. It brings the writer and reader together, it places us in solemn circumstances, for at the judgment seat of Christ, I must account for what I have written, and you must account for the use you make of it. O Holy and ever blessed Spirit, do thou accompany this little work with thy blessing, and make it the means of winning many souls to Christ! Gracious Saviour, commission this book to circulate widely, and spread abroad the honours of thy name! Father of mercies, smile upon the author's feeble attempt to honour thy Son, publish thy grace, and bring souls to thee! O holy, blessed, and glorious trinity, three persons in one God, give thy sanction and blessing to this effort, for thy mercy's sake! Amen.

JAMES SMITH.

Cheltenham.

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OR,

WEALTH FOR SOULS.

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NO CONDEMNATION.

ROM. viii 1.

PAUL had spoken of what he was before the law came to him in power, of what he experienced under the working of the law, of the two natures within him, and the constant warfare he felt as the result, and of the delight he now had in the law, and the joy he had in God. And now as the conclusion of his statement of his experience he joyfully exclaims, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Let us glance at

THE PECULIARITY. "In Christ Jesus." Union to Christ, and identification with Christ, form a great part of the mystery of the gospel. Every believer is in Christ, and Christ is in every believer. The saint and Christ are one. Are we in Christ? If so, we *know* Christ. Not with a mere theoretical know-

ledge, which may be obtained from books; but with a knowledge which the Holy Spirit works in the heart. We know Christ in the glory of his person, the perfection of his work, and the riches of his wondrous grace. We so know Christ, that he stands out before us, as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. And the more we know him, the more intimate we wish to become with him: and cry out with Paul, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." We not only know Christ, but we *need* him. And the longer we live the more we need him. Nor do we merely need Christ, but we need everything in Christ, or that Christ has. We need his blood to cleanse us, his righteousness to clothe us, and his Spirit to sanctify us. We need Christ daily, hourly; and in our dying day, in a dying hour, we shall need him most of all. As we need Christ, so we *come* to Christ. Not once for all, but having come to Christ once, we continue to come. We come to him in every trial, in every trouble, and in every conflict; we come to him for wisdom, and strength, and holiness. We come to him to unburthen our minds, and we come to him to find rest for our souls. How much of experimental religion consists in coming daily and hourly to Jesus. As we come to Jesus, we seek *union to Jesus*, nor can we rest but as we realise that we are identified with him,

and that he is identified with us. It is not enough to be with Jesus, we must be *in Christ:* members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Being in Christ, we participate in all Christ has, and are interested in all Christ has done, and so there is "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." This leads us to notice,

THE PRIVILEGE. "There is now no condemnation." There was once when we were under the law, for then we were children of wrath, even as others. Being under the law, we were bound to obey the precepts of the law, and failing, to suffer the penalty. We sinned, and the law condemned us: such was our state once. But becoming united to Christ, we were delivered from the law, and became dead to that under which we were held. Death to the law is the result of union to Christ, and then it is said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." "There is therefore now no condemnation," for believing in Jesus, his perfect work becomes ours. His life and death are placed to our account, and we understand the meaning of the Apostle, "He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Our sins were transferred to Jesus, were laid on him, that he might bear them in his own body; he became answerable for them, and therefore made an infinite atonement to deliver us from their guilt. Not only

so, but he took our place in such a sense, and in such a way, that we might be made righteous; not only so, but righteousness; not only righteousness, but the righteousness of God in him. Now if Jesus took our sins, and we take his righteousness, to us there can be no condemnation; Jesus was condemned for us—Jesus was executed for us—and because Jesus had given full satisfaction to the law and justice of God, as our representative, he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. In consequence of this, the moment we believe *we are acquitted from its charges*, for every charge has been met, and a full atonement made. *We are pronounced righteous by God*, for the perfect, the magnificent, the God-like, righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ is placed to our account, and thus we are righteous, even as he is righteous. In this way, God justifies the ungodly by faith. *We are accepted in the Beloved*, and God is well pleased with us.—Viewing us in his Son, as members of his mystical body, and as clothed with his glorious robe, he smiles upon us, manifests his love to us, and rejoices over us to do us good with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. *We are now placed among the brethren of Christ*, and Jesus, highly as he is exalted, is not ashamed to call us brethren. We are now treated as children of the same family, as possessing the same nature, and as loved with the same love as Jesus. "There is therefore now no con-

demnation." Doubts and fears there may be, but no condemnation. Persecution and opposition from men, and from Satan there may be, will be, but no condemnation. Deep trials and sore troubles, there may be, there will be, but no condemnation. Infirmities and sins there may be, will be, but no condemnation. Men may condemn us, but God will not. Conscience may at times condemn us, but the Judge of all will not. Satan may bring many accusations against us, but the righteous Advocate will appear, and reply to them for us, so that justice will not condemn us. O glorious truth, that NOW, poor as we are, imperfect as we are; tried, tempted, and distressed as we are, there is no condemnation! No, not one condemnation, but we are justified freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus—we are justified from all things. But it is time, that we considered,

THE PROOF OF OUR BEING IN CHRIST. "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The course, or path of the justified, is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. "Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Once the flesh, the body, and the soul as under the influence of carnal principles, ruled us. But, as renewed in the spirit of our minds, as created anew in Christ Jesus, as having Christ dwelling in us; we no longer walk after the motions, carnal desires,

and lusts of the flesh. The flesh will struggle, it will lust and fight against the Spirit, but it shall not reign, but shall be brought into subjection. Occasionally it may gain the mastery, and cause the Christian much sorrow, but it will not be allowed to have the dominion; the conflict will be renewed, and the victory will again be gained. Every one that is in union with Christ, has to do battle with the flesh day by day; and at length is crowned as an overcomer. In Christ, we have the Spirit of Christ! In Christ, we receive constant supplies from Christ! In Christ, we pant, pray, and strive to be like Christ! In Christ, we aspire to dwell with Christ! In Christ, we can never be satisfied until we are holy as Christ!

All who are in Christ, "walk after the Spirit." The precepts written under the inspiration of the Spirit become the rule of their life. They strive to keep them, doing all that they require, and avoiding all that they prohibit. The inward enlightening, and operation of the Spirit, discovers to them the beauty of holiness, and urges them to seek its attainment. The life of Jesus as set forth in the sacred Scriptures, is the great pattern which they strive to imitate. They would be like Christ. Just like Christ. Altogether like Christ. With the precepts of the gospel laid at their feet, and the operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart, and the holy life of Jesus kept before the eye, they walk in the paths

of righteousness, and endeavour to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present evil world. Just in proportion as we realise our union to Christ, and our freedom from condemnation through Christ, shall we pant to be holy, and seek to walk after the Spirit; and if we live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Let us not be satisfied without union to Christ. Let no convictions, impressions, enjoyments, or duties satisfy us; but let us seek to be one with Christ, through the Holy Spirit. Being united to Christ, let us seek daily to realise and enjoy our privilege. Let us walk as one with Christ, act as one with Christ, and go no where, nor do any thing, that is not in accordance with our profession of being one with Christ. Realising our justification as one with Christ, let us seek deeper sanctification. If justified by faith in Jesus, we are perfectly justified; for there are no degrees in justification. But though we are really sanctified, we are not perfectly sanctified. We may be more holy, more like Christ, and have more of the Spirit of God. Let us not then be satisfied with little when we may have much, but let us be constantly coming to Jesus, that we may receive out of his fulness and grace for grace. But however deep our sanctification, let us never live upon it, or look to it for peace. Jesus is the bread of life, let us live on him. Jesus is our peace, let us look to him for peace. We may look

at our justification and rejoice in it, but the more we look away from our sanctification to Jesus, the better; for it is while we are looking to Jesus, that the Spirit deepens his work, and conforms us more and more to the object before us. If justified, we shall be sanctified, for a change of state, is always accompanied with a change of nature. If in Christ, we must be in some measure like Christ. Out of Christ there is neither justification nor sanctification. The soul therefore that is living without faith in Jesus, without union to Jesus, is condemned already; and instead of being able to say "to me there is no condemnation," if it speaks truth it must say, "To me there is nothing but condemnation. My person is condemned, my sins are condemned, and my very religion is condemned. I am condemned by the gospel too. The law says, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them:' and I have not done them, therefore I am cursed. The Gospel saith, 'He that believeth not shall be damned, he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God,' and I have not faith in Christ, therefore I am condemned, and, Oh, dreadful! I shall be damned." But, sinner, though you are condemned now, you need not be condemned five minutes longer, for through Christ Jesus is preached unto you

the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things." Believe, and to you there is no condemnation, nor ever shall be! Believe, and life is yours, peace is yours, heaven is yours, for Christ is yours, and yours for ever!

Ye tempted and tried,
To Jesus draw nigh,
He suffered and died
Your wants to supply:
Trust him for salvation,
You need not to grieve,
"There's no condemnation
"To them that believe."

By day and by night
His love is made known,
It is his delight
To succour his own;
He will have compassion;
Then why should you grieve?
"There's no condemnation
"To them that believe."

Though Satan will seek
The sheep to annoy;
The helpless and weak
He ne'er shall destroy:
Christ is their salvation,
And strength he will give,
"There's no condemnation
"To them that believe."

THE LIVING STONE.

How many and various are the figures employed to represent our beloved Lord, and yet they all come short of his glory. The whole creation is insufficient to set forth the glory of Jesus. He who created all must be superior to all. But the representations made are intended to meet the wants or wishes of poor sinners, or exercised believers; and to set forth the experience of the Lord's people in reference to him. In making these remarks, I have my eye on a passage in the first epistle of Peter, in which the Apostle says, speaking of Christ, "*To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.*" 1 Pet. ii. 14.

Jesus is called a *stone*, to set forth his invincible strength, endless duration, and the infallible security he gives to his people. He is called a *living stone*, because he possesses life in himself, imparts life to every believer, and sustains the life he imparts. He was *disallowed*, rejected of men, both Jews and Gentiles, because he did not answer their carnal expectations, nor would he gratify their de-

praved desires. But he was *chosen of God*, to be the foundation of his Church, the corner stone of the spiritual temple, and the only way of access to himself. He is *precious* in the estimation of God, of angels, and of all saints—he is *honourable*, having all the elements of true honour in himself—he is *valuable*, beyond example or representation. Precious, because of his excellent nature, dignified offices, and glorious services. Like the stone Ezel, he sheweth the way, the way of life, peace, holiness, and honour. Like the stone at Horeb, he pours forth streams of living and life-giving water. Like the two stone tables, the law is to be seen written on him, and written out by him in his holy and beneficent life. Like the stone laid before Joshua the high priest on which was seven eyes, he attracts universal attention. On him the eye of his Father rests with ineffable delight. On him the eye of the Holy Spirit is fixed with unutterable pleasure. To him the eyes of the angels turn with joy and satisfaction. To him the eye of the poor sinner is directed for life and peace. On him the eye of the believer is fixed with expectation and gratitude. Nor can the devils keep their eyes off him, who has vanquished their chief, and is appointed to judge them all. To him justice looks for satisfaction, and receives it. To him mercy looks for a channel in which to flow, and finds it. It is the wonder of Heaven, the dread of hell, and the desire of all nations.

The experience of his people is represented by *coming to him*. "To WHOM COMING." It is not one act, but the business of life. All they need is in Jesus, and to him they must come for a supply, as they are taught their wants. By nature, we are all at a distance from Christ; and the carnal mind has a rooted dislike to Christ. By grace we are taught our need of him, a desire is produced in our minds to come to him, and then by faith and prayer we approach him. Coming to Christ and believing on him are one and the same. I must believe that he is, that he is suited to me, and that I cannot do without him, or I shall never come to him. Having come to him once, and found peace, and enjoyed rest, I shall continue to come. All who are taught by the Holy Spirit come to Jesus to *build* their hope of salvation on him—to find *rest* in him—to be *quickened* by him—or to receive a life from him, and be united to him. Yes, all true Christians come to Jesus, become one with Jesus, and are conformed to Jesus. As he is the *living stone*, they become *lively stones*, and are built up a spiritual house. What an honour it is to Jesus, that all our supplies are entrusted to him; and what a comfort it is to us, that we have only to come to Jesus and freely receive all we need.

Reader, do you know the character, use, and design of this stone? It is a living stone. It forms a firm foundation for us to

build on for eternity. It is intended for poor sinners, that they may enjoy peace with God, find rest unto their souls, and be safe amidst all the storms of life, in the article of death, and throughout eternity. Are you coming to this stone, building on it, and becoming like it? If you have come once, you will come again, and the more you come, the more you will wish to come. Instead therefore of asking, Have I come to Christ? let us ask, Am I coming to Christ to-day, and every day of my life? For this is the only certain proof that Christ dwells in us. If you have come to Christ, you are building on Christ, he is the only foundation on which you build for eternity. You rest on his glorious person, and finished work alone, for acceptance with God, and everlasting life. And if you are building on Christ, by a living faith, you do his word, keep his sayings, and become conformed to his image. No one truly believes on Christ, who does not become growingly like Christ. Is Christ *chosen by you?* He is God's choice, is he yours? God chose him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth, and if you are like-minded with God, you will chose him to be your Saviour, and he will become the grand object of your desire. Is Christ *precious to you?* He is precious to God, being his only begotten Son, his beloved One; and if you are taught and sanctified by the Spirit of God he will be precious, most precious to you.

You will esteem him highly, enjoy his presence and his favour, and value him above all besides. "To you that believe he is precious." Oh, how precious! Do you *recommend him to others?* If you have proved the truth of his word for yourself—if you have found joy and peace in believing on his name—if you are united to him, and daily draw all your supplies from him—how can you refrain from recommending him to others? If you know that souls all around you are living in sin, dying in sin, and are perishing for ever as the consequence of their sin—and if you know that there is salvation for them only in Jesus—will you not recommend him to them? And, knowing, that it is only by coming to Jesus, and building on Jesus, that they can enjoy salvation, will you not, must you not, urge them to come to him, that they might have life?

Chosen of God, and precious too
Is Christ in each believer's view;
Built upon him, and stablished here,
They all as living stones appear.

No other trust shall intervene,
To him I'll look, on him I'll lean;
And all foundations I'll disown,
But him who is the *living stone*.

Here my salvation stands secure,
This rock of ages must endure;
Nor shall my hope be overthrown,
Built upon Christ, the *living stone*.

MARY.

"Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard his words."—LUKE x. 39.

WE have three views of Mary in the New Testament. Mary *working*, washing the feet of Jesus, and anointing them with precious ointment. Mary *weeping* at the sickness and death of her brother Lazarus, and Mary *sitting at the feet of Jesus*, listening to his words. The family was a peculiarly favoured one, each member of it was a believer, an object of the Saviour's love. God did not here take one of a family, as he sometimes does, but he took the whole. Let us notice Mary's—

CHARACTER. She was a quiet contemplative Christian. We differ very much in our natural dispositions, and temperament. Some are lively, others dull. Some are full of talk, and some very reserved. We carry our natural peculiarities with us into a state of grace. Grace refines, ennobles, and regulates our natural powers, but does not essentially alter them. They are christianised, sanctified, and consecrated to God, but remain the same. Mary had *faith* in Jesus, she believed

him to be the Messiah, and received him as sent of God. She *loved* Jesus, and therefore valued his company, and prized his word. She *enjoyed the company of Jesus*, and therefore sought him out, and continued with him. She *expected to get good from Jesus*, and therefore took and kept her seat at his feet. She *quietly left her concerns with Jesus*, therefore if Martha upbraid her, she leaves Jesus to answer for her. Here, beloved, is an example for us, we should believe in Jesus, as the Son of God; love Jesus, as the Saviour of sinners; prize the company of Jesus, and therefore follow him, and cleave to him with full purpose of heart; quietly leave our concerns with Jesus, and so live without anxiety, foreboding, or grief. But let us look at Mary's—

PRIVILEGE. Jesus *loved* her, for if he had not she never would have loved him. His love is always the cause of ours. We love him because he first loved us. He *made himself known to her*, manifesting himself unto her as he did not unto the world. He *visited her*, as the friend of the family, and the lover of her soul. He *held fellowship and communion with her*, treating her as a friend. He *vindicated her*, when Martha was angry, and wished him to reprove her. Just so with every believer, for we all have the same great and precious privilege. Jesus loves us, and loves us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he teaches us our need of him and draws us to him. He makes him-

self known to us by the gracious teaching of his Holy Spirit, as our Saviour and unchangeable friend. He visits us in mercy, sometimes in the Sanctuary, sometimes at his table, sometimes in the closet, and sometimes in the solitary walk; and his visits are always precious. He enters into communion with us, drawing out our hearts to himself in prayer, praise, meditation and adoration; and he applies his truth to us, and sheds abroad his love within us. He also vindicates his people, not always just at the time they are reproached, slandered, or misrepresented; but eventually he brings forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. So that we may always rejoice, that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous One. We will now glance at Mary's

POSITION. She was sitting at the feet of Jesus. Most probably he was reclining on the couch, and she went and took her place behind him, where she could hear what he said, and occasionally get a glimpse of his face. It is the posture of *humility*, she took the lowest place. She had no wish to be seen, nor did she regard her own ease, she was intent on getting good from Jesus. It was the posture of *attention*, she wished to catch every word, and to understand all that the Lord was saying. If Jesus teach, Mary will attend and listen. It was the posture of a *learner*, she was a disciple of Jesus, therefore she sat

down at his feet, that she may receive of his words. He need not now say unto her, "Learn of me," for she was most anxious to do so. It was the posture of *satisfaction*, if she could but be within the sound of his voice, within the sight of his eye, it was enough for Mary. Any where with Jesus. It was also the posture of *repose*, here at the feet of Jesus, she found rest unto her soul. Her desires were satisfied, her love was gratified, her hungry soul was fed. It was enough, the feet of Jesus was to her a kind of earthly heaven. Reader, how is it with you? Are you humble enough to take a seat at the feet of Jesus? Is it your delight to listen to his words? Are you like a little child desiring to learn of him, and be taught by him? Are you satisfied if you can but get near to Jesus? Do you find sweet and refreshing repose in his presence? If so, happy are you. Observe now Mary's—

EMPLOYMENT. She was *hearing* Jesus. We have not his discourse, one could almost wish we had. But anything from Jesus would interest Mary. She was *receiving* his doctrine. It is one thing to hear, but quite another thing to receive. She saw the beauty, tasted the sweetness, and realized the value of the Saviour's communications, therefore she drank them in as the dry ground the rain, or the thirsty ox the water. She endeavoured to *retain* what she heard. She took no notes, but she caught fast hold of the truth with her

memory. She held it and would not let it go. Like David, she hid it in her heart. Like another Mary, she laid up those things in her heart. She felt *interested* in all he said, she was *riveted* to the spot she had chosen, she was *pleased* with his various communications, and was *profited* by all she heard. She seized the opportunity offered her, and thus displayed her ardour, teachableness and spirituality. She sat at the *feet* of Jesus in the cottage, she now sits by his *side* in the mansion. Reader, how is it with you? Do you hear Jesus, when he speaks by his servants, or in his word? Do you receive and retain his truth? Are you pleased with, and profitted by, the gospel? Have you Mary's wisdom, to seize opportunities to get good? Are you teachable and spiritual as Mary was? These are important questions, may the Lord apply them, and enable you to answer them.

Let us ever remember, that Jesus is present in his ordinances, present whenever, and wherever his people meet. For he has said, "Wherever two or three meet together in my name, there am I." Yes, Jesus is as really present, though not as visibly, or sensibly present, as he was in the cottage of Bethany. We may therefore do as Mary did, we may sit down at his feet, listen and receive of his word. But have we the open ear to listen—the honest heart to receive—the refined taste to enjoy—the faithful mind to re-

tain—the lowly spirit to embrace—and the willing mind to take the lowest place, as Mary had? Too many meet where Jesus is, but do not perceive him; do not feel their need of him; do not thirst for his grace, or long for the application of his word. To them religion is but a form. To them the gospel is no more than the word of man. To them, alas! too often, it becomes the savour of death unto death.

My soul, I charge thee to take thy place, as Mary did at the feet of Jesus. Let busy Martha be careful and troubled about many things—one thing is needful—see to it that thou choose the good part which shall not be taken from thee. Go where Jesus goes. Get near to Jesus if possible, even if thou hast to force thy way through a crowd, as the poor woman in the gospel had. Keep near to Jesus, let not company, business, or any angry relative draw or drive thee away. It is the most blessed place under heaven. Mary's privilege prepares for John's. Those who are willing to sit at the feet of Jesus, and esteem it a privilege to do so; will be raised to lean on his bosom, and sit by his side for ever. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the needy from the dunghill; to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." Oh what a transition, from the dunghill, to inherit the throne of glory! What wonders love can do! How low grace can stoop! What privileges are conferred on worms!

COMFORT FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

MANY of the Lord's little ones doubt their interest in Christ, their acceptance with God, and their title to everlasting life. In consequence of this, they are not happy; they are afraid to profess Christ, nor can they be as active for Christ as they should. I want to write a few lines that may be of use to such, if the Lord will. The occasion of my doing so is, I have just received a letter from a godly minister, who, speaking of one of his congregation, says, "Poor thing, her cry, very often when I am talking to her, is, IF I WERE BUT SURE. BUT I AM NOT QUITE SURE." She has a hope, and so have many, but that is not satisfactory. She wants to be sure, quite sure. Well, we cannot blame her for this; for certainty, on a matter of so much importance as the salvation of the soul, is most desirable. But ought not such persons to be sure? Let us examine the case a little, endeavour to impart a little comfort, and give a word of advice.

"IF I WERE BUT SURE." This indicates a deep sense of the value and importance of

salvation—betrays a jealousy of self, manifests a fear of deception, and is the very breathing of sincerity. Such language never characterised the mind of the presumptuous, or the hypocrite, or any one dead in sin. Such characters never feel this concern, are never exercised with such fears, never heartily exclaim, "*If I were but quite sure.*"

"IF I WERE BUT QUITE SURE." This exclamation proves the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. He has convinced of sin, of danger, and of a judgment to come. He has shown the soul the value of salvation, the importance of an interest in Christ, and the necessity of a thorough change of heart. The soul that utters this cry is taught of God, and knows something of the plague of the heart, of the power of Satan, and of the deceitfulness of sin. It will not build on a sandy foundation, be satisfied with uncertain evidences, or stop short of union with Christ. It must make sure work, it must have Scriptural evidences, it must be satisfied with heartfelt experimental proof. Wherever this is the case, there is the work of the Spirit of God, for nature cannot produce this, and Satan would not if he could.

"I AM NOT QUITE SURE." Perhaps you want more to assure you than the Scriptures warrant; you may be unnecessarily doubtful. Have you faith in Christ? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God—and as the result do you receive his word, rest on

his finished work, and rely alone on his great atoning sacrifice? If so, *you ought to be quite sure;* for the holy Scripture says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." And, again, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." If every believer is born of God, if every one that has faith in Christ is a child of God, then if you believe in Jesus, if you have faith in Christ, however feeble your faith may be, *you ought to be sure that you are God's child.* Do you call Jesus Lord, and, bowing to his authority, take his word for your rule, looking upon everything that is contrary thereunto to be sin? Then holy Scripture saith, No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; and *if you have thus the Holy Ghost, you ought to be quite sure.* Are you sorry for your sins? Do you confess them before God, and seek grace, so that you may turn from them, and live godly, righteously, and soberly, in the present world? If so, God has given you repentance unto life; and having repentance unto life, you can never perish, and therefore, *you ought to be quite sure.* Do you love the Lord's people, and love them most who are most holy, and most like Christ? Then *you ought to be quite sure,* for the Apostle John says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Not to enlarge, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart

that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Do you not acknowledge Christ Jesus to be the Lord, the Messiah, the Son of God? Do you not believe that God raised him from the dead, as a proof of the perfection of his work, and as a testimony to his divinity? *Then you ought to be quite sure,* for the Word of God says you shall be saved.

"I AM NOT QUITE SURE." Perhaps you are judging yourself by a wrong standard, and measuring yourself by a wrong rule. You are looking for that in yourself, that you will only find in Christ; or you are looking for something in yourself to put in the place of Christ. You are to be saved as a sinner, only as a sinner, as nothing but a sinner. You will never find anything in yourself on which to rest, or with which to be satisfied. The more you look into yourself, the more depravity you will discover, the viler you will seem to become, and the more the desperate wickedness of the heart will be revealed to you. You will be compelled to turn away from self entirely, and rest on Christ alone. You will be obliged to look for pardon on the ground of his blood alone, and expect to be justified for the sake of his obedience alone, and to be sanctified by his Spirit alone. You will be compelled to seek everything in Christ, and take him to be your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The eye must be fixed on Jesus, and be kept fixed on

Jesus; and if that is the case, *you may feel sure, quite sure, that you are in Christ.*

"I AM NOT QUITE SURE." Rest not in this state, for you may be quite sure, you ought to be quite sure. Read the Word of God more. Run from everything within you, and without you, to Christ alone. Keep the eye steadily fixed on Jesus as the sinner's substitute; as the great sacrifice for sin; as dying the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; as coming into the world on purpose to save sinners; and as able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Oppose to all the temptations, injections, and buffetings of Satan, the glorious fact, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; resist him in the faith of this when he comes to tempt you to doubt, fear, and despond, and he will flee from you. Finally, seek earnestly, importunately, and with all simplicity of soul, the sealing and witness of the Holy Spirit. By the application of the atoning blood, and the promises of Holy Scripture, he will seal you unto the day of redemption; and by his gracious work in your soul he will assure your conscience, and bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God. With the eye fixed on Jesus, with the hope built on Jesus, with the Holy Spirit in the heart, and resisting Satan stedfastly, believing in the power, virtue, and everlasting efficacy of the blood of

the Lamb, you will no longer have to say, except in seasons of darkness and violent temptation, "IF I WERE BUT SURE;" but will rejoice in God and confidently say, "I AM QUITE SURE, I AM THE LORD'S, AND THE LORD IS MINE."

Ye Lambs of Christ's fold, ye weaklings in faith,
Who long to lay hold on life by his death;
Who fain would believe him, and in your best room
Would gladly receive him, but fear to presume.

Remember one thing: (Oh! may it sink deep)
Our Shepherd and King cares much for his sheep,
To trust him endeavour, the work is his own;
He makes the believer, and gives him his crown.

Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak,
'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek:
His Spirit will cherish the life he first gave;
You never shall perish, if Jesus can save.

Blest soul, that can say, "Christ only I seek!"
Wait for him alway; be constant though weak:
The Lord, whom thou seekest, will not tarry long,
And to him the weakest is dear as the strong.

THE WORLD'S WANTS.

A BENEVOLENT mind cannot confine its attention to itself, nor to its own family, or immediate connections. It wishes well to all. It desires to see all happy. Nor does it only desire, but, if sanctified by grace, it pours out prayers to God, and makes use of all the means at its command. When one plan is finished, it thinks of another, and is always proposing, planning, and doing something to make God's world, a happy world. It breathes peace, and glows with good will to men.

I am deeply conscious of my imperfections, and am humbled whenever I review my poor efforts for the good of others; and yet I believe I have written these few lines out of my own heart. Yes, I do desire to see all men happy. I would fain do something to add to the happiness of my fellow-men; and whenever I hear that, by my pen or otherwise, I have been the means of making a fellow-sinner happy, I rejoice.

This morning, I have been taking a look at the world—at its divisions, disorders, dissensions, miseries, and woes,—and I have

been asking what does the world want,—what would be a remedy for its maladies; and after some consideration, I conclude that three things are necessary, and as I can take part in procuring and conferring them, I intend to do so: and in order that others may co-operate and assist, I shall briefly state what I conceive to be needful.

First, THE TRUTH OF GOD. Darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. The world is ignorant of its Creator, for the world by wisdom knew not God. Ignorance of God and His rights, of His nature and disposition, of His grace and mercy, of His provision and promises, almost universally prevails. False views of God have been received, and misconceptions of God are general. Besides this, man knoweth not himself, his depravity and destiny, his danger and duty, the way to obtain deliverance from sin, escape the wrath of God, and enjoy the happiness of heaven. Ignorant of the nature of true holiness and how to acquire it, men cannot be happy. Of millions of my fellow-immortals it may be said, "It is a people of no understanding;" "They are all gone out of the way;" "Madness is in their hearts;" "There is none that seeketh after God." Lamentable state! Melancholy condition this! God's remedy for the wants and woes of humanity is to be found in His truth—His gospel. Nor can we do a better thing for the world, than carry out our Lord's command, and "preach

the gospel to every creature." "Go teach all nations" the pure, spiritual, and simple truth of God. The truth of God enlightens the understanding, sanctifies the heart, and reforms the life. It gives correct views, produces holy feelings, and leads every one that is influenced by it, to live righteously, soberly, and godly in the present world. The truth is the instrument by which God works, it is the weapon by which the Church conquers, and it is the rule by which every sincere convert walks. It must be published among all nations for the obedience of faith. Wonders have been wrought by it in times past, and wonders will be wrought by it yet; for it is mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, the casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. This leads me to notice that the world needs,

Secondly, THE SPIRIT OF GOD. The Spirit seldom, if ever, works without the truth; and the truth never works effectually without the Spirit. The Spirit, therefore, and the truth must go together: the one is put into our hands, and the other is promised to accompany and crown our efforts. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, and without Him there is no spiritual life. It is the Spirit that teacheth, and without Him the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of

God. It is the Spirit that helpeth our infirmities, and without Him we are weak and powerless. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is the Spirit that giveth the increase. The new birth is of the Spirit, by the truth; and sanctification is of the Spirit, by the truth. While, therefore, we should be most anxious to spread the truth, we should, if possible, be more anxious that the Spirit should accompany the truth, filling it with life and power. Like the bones in Ezekiel's vision, man—poor, powerless, lifeless man,—is to be seen all around us: we may, we should preach to the dry bones, because God has commanded us, and by our preaching a reformation may be effected; but there will be no spiritual life, no standing up before God, no acting for Christ, until the Spirit of God is communicated. The religion of the heart is produced immediately by the Holy Spirit; and, when produced, it is nourished, strengthened, and perfected by the Spirit. Our poor world deeply needs the powerful preaching of the truth of God, and that that truth be attended by the Spirit of God. Hence we observe, that the world needs,

Thirdly, THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD. They only can pray aright, for they only have faith; and without faith it is impossible to please God. They are a royal priesthood, they can enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and they are commanded to pray and intercede for all men. They are

in office for the world. They are its lights, and should diffuse the light of divine truth all around them. They are its priests, and should plead and intercede for it. The state of this poor world should deeply affect us; the doom of this guilty world should stir us up, as the doom of Sodom did Abraham, to intercede fervently for it. Alone in the closet prayer should be offered for the world. At the family altar, we should never forget the world. When met specially to plead with God, we should deeply sympathize with the world. The world needs the prayers of God's people, for their prayers have power with God. It was in answer to prayer, that the Holy Spirit was at first given. It was the fervent, energetic, importunate prayers of the primitive believers, that brought down such a blessing on the labours of the apostles and early ministers of the gospel. Prayer is the means appointed by God to bring down blessings on our souls, our families, the church and the world. The world does not, cannot pray, for itself. As, therefore, pure benevolence would prompt us to speak for the dumb, lend a hand to the blind, or provide a crutch for the lame; just so, the benevolence of the gospel should prompt us to pray earnestly, heartily, daily, for a poor dumb world, for poor blind sinners, for poor crippled human nature. The truth must be spread abroad, the Spirit must descend, before the glory of the Lord can be revealed, and all flesh see it

together; and as these privileges will never be enjoyed but as the effect of the Lord's blessing, in answer to the powerful pleadings of His church, all the people of God should pray much for the world.

Brethren, is it so? Does the world need the truth of God, and are we intrusted with that truth for the world? It is even so. Can we then refuse or neglect to spread abroad that truth in every direction, until it reaches to earth's remotest bounds, without being cruel and dishonest? *Cruel*, to see souls perishing, while we have the remedy they need, and refuse or neglect to make it known! *Dishonest*, seeing we are put in trust with the gospel, and are commanded to *preach* it to every creature, and to teach it to all the nations! Does the world need the Spirit of God, and is the gift of the Spirit suspended on the prayers of the church? It is; for Jesus has said, that our heavenly Father is much more willing to give the Spirit, than an earthly father is to give a good gift to his child: and our heavenly Father has said, that though He has promised, He will yet be inquired of to grant the blessing promised. Can we then see the world lie dead in trespasses and in sins, and know that nothing but the Spirit accompanying the truth, can raise them from a death in sin to a life of righteousness—and know, too, that the Spirit is only to be expected in answer to our united, earnest, and persevering prayers—and can we withhold

those prayers, without being guilty of our brother's blood? If sinners destroy themselves, and we do not try to prevent it, are we not accessory to their ruin? Can we be guiltless of their blood? Can we, living as we do, acting as we do, honestly say with the apostle, "*I am clear from the blood of all men?*" Ought we not rather to pray with David, "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

O that the Lord would so lay the subject on our hearts, that we may feel that we cannot rest, cannot enjoy our temporal comforts, or religious privileges, if the truth of God is not sent to all nations—if the Spirit of God is not poured upon us from on high—and if in every place, and by every believer, prayer is not offered for the world, that the earth may be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea! Let us rise up as one man, and remind the Lord of His oath, of His promise, "As I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with my glory!" and plead with Him until it is made good, or we are wafted on the wings of such prayers to glory.

THE DRESSMAKER AND THE ACTRESS.

THAT God is the hearer and the answerer of prayer, is very generally admitted; but it is one thing to acknowledge this truth in the general, and another to prove it in our own personal experience. I have just received, in a letter from New York, a very striking case of the power of prayer, and of the way in which God at times proves the consistency of his poor children. It was related at the Fulton-street prayer meeting, and thus communicated by a godly man who was present. He says, "I went down to the Fulton-street noon-day prayer meeting yesterday—such seasons of blessedness are not often mine to enjoy—but I was more than repaid for going there: a very remarkable example of simple faithfulness and fidelity, in the person of a poor dressmaker, was related, and you can easily believe that there was not a dry eye in the place. It seems she had been a long time out of employment, and being almost brought down to want, she betook herself to prayer, asking that He who conde-

scended to care for her soul would now in her extremity care for her poor body, and send her some employment before the day was out. About ten o'clock in the morning her prayer was answered, but in such a way as only brought her perplexity and trial. An actress, about to fill a new and closely approaching engagement, bringing with her the materials for her new costumes, entered her apartments, and soliciting her attention, began to give instructions as to the making up, &c. The dressmaker, being exceedingly conscientious as to the purposes for which they would be used, was undecided in her reply. Finally, she told the actress that if she would wait a few minutes, to enable her to consult her Father, she would give her a positive answer. And then and there, in her presence, she bowed her knees, and in audible words addressed the throne of grace. In a few moments the astonished actress was struck with conviction, and cried out 'lost! lost!' She flung herself on her knees beside the other in perfect agony of mind. The result was, the order was countermanded, her resolution fixed, never more to appear on the stage, and the engagement consequently broken. In three weeks more her soul was free, her spirit was rejoicing in God her Saviour, and her name was enrolled among the followers of Jesus. It was also stated that legitimate employment offered itself before the day was out."

What a striking instance of the power of

prayer! What an illustration of the Lord's word, "Them that honour me, I will honour."

Reader, do you pray? Do you obtain answers to prayer? Have you a tender conscience, as this poor dressmaker had, who feared to offend God, who habitually consulted the Lord, and who was not ashamed to ask for his direction and guidance before one who came to employ her? Her extremity was God's opportunity. He tried her by poverty, he then put her principles to the test by the offer of questionable employment, and finding her faithful he honoured her in the conversion of the actress, and then gave her such employment as she needed and could approve.

Let the poor apply to the God of providence in their poverty. Let us all get and keep a tender conscience. Let us never be afraid to do the thing that is right under any circumstances. Let us consult God in all doubtful cases, reading his word, and applying at his throne. Let us never be ashamed to pray because our fellow creatures are present. Nor let us fancy that God cannot or will not use us in the conversion of souls because we are poor, illiterate, or hidden from public view. If my reader is not a Christian, I must say, that what the actress felt you must feel. You must feel that you are lost, or you will never seek a Saviour. In every case where the Spirit of God works in the soul, he convinces of sin, warns of danger, awakens con-

cern for salvation, brings upon the knees before God, and leads to the Lord Jesus Christ for life and peace. Have you been so convinced? Have you been alarmed at your dangerous state as a sinner? Has your your whole soul been filled with desires for salvation? Have you been brought upon your knees before God in private, to confess your sins, and cry for mercy? Have you fled to the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation? If you have you will be saved; but if you have not we beseech you to think of your dangerous state, and before you do any other thing, go, fall upon your knees, and cry to God for mercy. There is salvation in the Lord Jesus for such as you. His precious blood will cleanse you from all sin. His Holy Spirit will sanctify your depraved nature, and fit you for heaven. In one word, seek to obtain the salvation that is in Christ, and you will be happy now and happy for evermore. God will be your Father; the Lord Jesus will be your Friend; the Holy Spirit will be your Comforter; and heaven will be your final home.

Just in the last distressing hour
The Lord displays delivering power;
The mount of danger is the place,
Where we shall see surprising grace.

HE IS LORD OF ALL.

PETER was now engaged in opening the door of faith to the Gentiles. He was preaching Christ to Cornelius and his friends. He testifies, that the middle wall of partition, which separated the Jew from the Gentile, was now broken down, and that God was no respecter of persons. That all mankind stood on a dead level before God, all having sinned, all alike were to have the Saviour proclaimed to them, and to be invited to come and be saved by him. But as he was speaking of Jesus, his heart glowed with love to his adorable Lord, and by way of parenthesis, he throws this title of the Redeemer, into his discourse, "HE IS LORD OF ALL." Acts x. 36.

All things belong to Jesus. All things in heaven, and all things on earth. Himself testified, "All things that the Father hath, are mine." "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." And the apostle testifieth, "All things were made by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Blessed Lord Jesus, we rejoice that thou art Lord of all! That all things on earth and in heaven are thine. Thy private mark is upon them all. They are for thy glory, and they will be used to shew forth thy praise.

All are accountable to Jesus. He will judge angels. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. To him, every intelligent and responsible creature, must render his account. He has a right to rule us by his laws, and to bind us by his decisions. Thanks be unto God, all his laws are righteous, and all his decisions are just. He rules in heaven, on earth, and in hell. His will is the law of the universe. To him every knee must bow, and to him every tongue must confess and acknowledge him to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

All must glorify him, either passively, or actively. We may refuse to yield to him, but we must bend or break. He will get glory from all he has created, and by all he has made. The best way to glorify him, is to admit his claims, bow to his authority, accept his invitation, and come to him as poor sinners to be saved by his merit and mercy. Never is Jesus so pleased with us, or so glorified by us, as when we come, just as we are, lost, ruined, and condemned, to be saved alone by his grace. In this way we honour his mercy, gratify his love, and glorify his grace; but if we do not so, we must experience his wrath, pay the penalty of disobedience, and so glorify his justice.

If Jesus is Lord of all, we should believe his promises, for they are truth, and he has all power in heaven and earth to make them good. He cannot break his word, or fail one

soul that puts its trust in him. We should rely on his atonement, for it is infinitely and eternally efficacious. He allowed our sins to be placed to his account, he undertook to suffer their desert, and in so doing he rendered to divine justice infinite satisfaction for them. His blood avails to procure pardon, peace, and everlasting life for every sinner that trusts in his name. We should obey his precepts, which form an easy yoke for all who bow to his will. If Jesus has promised us every good thing in time, and heaven when time with us shall be no more—if Jesus has given himself for us, laid down his life to deliver us from the desert of our sins—if he offers eternal life without money and without price, surely, surely we ought to observe his statutes and keep his laws.

If Jesus is Lord of ALL, then all, without an exception should acknowledge his rights, bow to his sovereignty, seek to escape from his wrath, gladly accept his mercy, and willingly yield themselves to be saved by his grace. Will Jesus, the Lord of all save me, and shall I refuse to be saved by him? Will the Lord of all, take me into his service, receive me at court, and introduce me to his Father with honour, and shall I refuse such favour? Will the Lord of all, wash me in his own blood, clothe me in his own righteousness, bestow on me his own Spirit, and make me meet to dwell in heaven for ever—and shall I, can I, ungratefully refuse the whole?

THE GRAVE VISITED.

It was said of Mary the sister of Lazarus, "She is gone to the grave to weep there," and I have just been to the village graveyard, to stand by the newly opened grave of one of the lambs of my flock. He had been an interesting child, a scholar in our Sunday School, and the pride of his father's heart. But death pays no attention to any of these things. When it once gets its commission signed, it soon strikes the blow. The surgeon's skill, the parents' attention, and the teacher's prayers are powerless to avert the stroke. The tree marked must fall. My young friend fell, and fell rather suddenly too. But there was hope in his death, a hope founded on God's most blessed word.

F—— P—— died at the age of twelve years. A considerable time before his last illness, he came to me in deep distress of mind. He had been filled with alarm by a distressing dream, referring to the end of the world. He wept and trembled greatly. I persuaded him not to trouble himself about the end of the world, but to seek the Lord at once, that so he may be prepared for that

event, or any other. His convictions deepened, and the boards where he knelt to pray were often wet with his tears. He felt his need of a Saviour, he sought the pardon of sin, he prayed for peace with God; but for a season he seemed to seek and pray in vain. But God is faithful, and the promises He has made to simple faith and earnest prayer, must be answered. He may delay for a time, but He will never refuse to fulfil His own word.

About six or eight months before his death, his teacher gave him a small book, entitled, "Sins Forgiven;" this he read with deep interest, and was enabled to believe for the pardon of his own sins. Prior to this, he often appeared very gloomy at home, but now his countenance was changed, and he said to his mother,—"*I am happy now!*" "Are you, my boy," she said, "what makes you happy?" "Because my sins are forgiven," he replied. "My teacher told me that Christ was willing to forgive, and now I feel He has forgiven me." It appeared evident to those about him, that a work of grace was begun in his heart, and that he was trusting in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of his soul. When prevented attending the Lord's house on the Sabbath, he would take his brother and sister into a room by themselves, and read and explain God's word, and pray with them; shewing that he felt a concern for their salvation. He was at length

seized with a cold which brought on a fever; for three or four weeks he suffered very patiently, and then fell asleep.

During his illness, his mother thinking (as he never complained), that he might not be aware of his danger, said to him, "My boy, you are very ill." "Never mind, mother," said he, "I am thankful that I can say what thousands cannot, that if I die I shall not go to hell." At another time, when his mother was expressing her sorrow at the idea of parting with him, he said, "Better to part for a short time than a long." His teacher visited him the day before his death, and found him suffering very much, but very patiently; his mind was calm and happy. He asked him, if the will of God were so, would he rather die than live, and he emphatically answered, "YES." The next morning, being turned on his pillow, he sighed three times and was gone—gone to be for ever with the Lord.

How many of His lambs the Great Shepherd gathers in His arms, and carries them to His fold above? To how many young persons our Sunday Schools have been made a blessing. Our dear Redeemer still takes the little ones in His arms and blesses them. How sweet the peace He gives them. How simple the faith He bestows upon them. How patiently He enables them to suffer, and how calmly and quietly they die. Precious Lord Jesus, we bless Thee for Thy

and wishes us to look to him for all we need. He is our rightful sovereign, and has placed us under law. He is our gracious Saviour, and has brought us into liberty and peace. To him we owe the homage of the heart, and the obedience of the life.

"*Worship thou him.*" This is the command of the Father. Not only are we to love his person, reverence his authority, and do his will; but we are to render him the worship and adoration of the heart. We cannot think of him too highly, love him too ardently, or adore him too solemnly. He is worthy of all. Of more than all. And as the Father commands us to worship him, it is clear that he is really, truly, and properly God. God by nature, not by office. God equally with the Father, and the Holy Spirit. To him, therefore, we may bring our petitions; from him, we may expect our supplies; and at his hands, we shall receive every blessing. O for grace to adore the Saviour! O to be enabled to trust him as God, obey him as God, and worship him as God!

Jesus is to be worshipped in public, in the great congregation. Jesus is to be worshipped in the family, and thus to be honoured before our children and domestics. Jesus is to be worshipped in private, as the omniscient and omnipresent God. Every knee should bow to him, in prayer, praise, and intercession. Let us then testify our love to Jesus, by habitually and devoutly worshipping him.

And let us bear in mind, that the Lordship of Jesus, and the worship of his people, are inseparably connected; the one being defended the other is maintained.

Reader, do you worship Jesus? Do you render to him the homage of the heart? Jesus is to be worshipped both with the body and with the soul. To him every knee *must* bow, for the Father has solemnly pledged his word that they shall. If therefore you do not bow to him now as the God of grace, you will be obliged to bow to him at length as the God of justice. We must either bend or break. He will be Lord. He will subdue every foe, either by his gracious power, or by his just wrath. Every obdurate foe he will destroy, for he has informed us, that the time is coming when he will say, "As for these mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring them forth, and slay them before me."

Brightness of the Father's glory,
  Shall thy praise unuttered lie?
Fly, my tongue, such guilty silence!
  Sing the Lord who came to die.

Did archangels sing thy coming?
  Did the shepherds learn their lays?—
Shame would cover me ungrateful,
  Should my tongue refuse to praise.

From the highest throne in glory,
  To the cross of deepest woe;
All to ransom guilty captives:—
  Flow, my praise, for ever flow.

STRENGTH FOR THE DAY.

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."—DEUT. xxxiii. 25.

THE future—who can tell what will be in the future? Our days are numbered, but we know not their number. Our days are appointed, but we know not their character. Nor would it be well for us to know. We know something better, for we know, that our heavenly Father has made full, suitable, and sufficient provision for us; to enable us to meet, endure, and honourably pass through all the days of our appointed time. Let me never look into the future, but through God's word; and then, I shall not be unduly elated by the prospect of prosperity, nor unduly depressed by the prospect of adversity. Every day I shall have God with me. Every day I shall have the throne of grace near me. Every day the promise will belong to me, "*As thy days, so shall thy strength be.*"

HERE THE FUTURE IS ANTICIPATED. "As thy days," thy future days. What will be the character of those days, or how many of them there will be, I know not. Whether

they will be dark or light—wet or dry—foggy or clear—hot or cold—long or short—I am not informed, but I am assured of sufficient strength. I shall no doubt in the future, as in the past, meet with days of conflict, when the enemy will thrust sorely at me—days of disappointment, when lover and friend will stand far from me—days of pain, when much patience will be required—days of depression, when I shall be filled with heaviness, through manifold temptations—days of bereavement, when the Lord will take away the desire of mine eyes with a stroke—but for every day, the strength promised me will be sufficient. My working days may be many, and my resting days but few—my days of pain may be long, and my days of pleasure may be short—but long or short, working or resting, as my days, so will my strength be.

HERE THEN THE FUTURE IS PROVIDED FOR ALSO. "*As* thy days, *so* shall thy strength be." It shall be sufficient for the day, be the day what it may. It is wisely apportioned, each will have enough, none any to spare. It is to be daily given, we shall not have to-morrow's strength either to use or squander to-day. As we must wait until to-morrow, for to-morrow's troubles; so must we wait also for to-morrow's strength. The promise that ensures us suitable and sufficient strength, for all future days, is made by one that knows all that will happen, he cannot be taken by surprise, nor can any thing occur which he

has not known long before. Not only so, but the promise is made by one that loves us. Loves us—but who shall describe, who can suitably represent his love! It is infinite, and cannot be comprehended. It is eternal, and cannot be measured. It is unchangeable, and cannot be diverted from its objects. It is sovereign, and was fixed on them without any thing in them to attract or draw it toward them. It is love, deeper than a father's—love, more tender than a mother's—love, stronger than a husband's. It is a fire that cannot be quenched, an ocean that cannot be exhausted, a sun that will never set. It is also the promise of one that will never leave us, nor forsake us. O precious promise, of an infinitely wise, loving, and present God! It is *divine*, therefore both true and certain. It is tried, and was never known to fail. As, therefore, it is divine and well tried, let us receive it as from God's hand, believe it with all our hearts, and trust it with all the strength of our souls.

Let us then look forward into the future without fear, care, or foreboding. What should we fear, if we have strength given us for any thing, for every thing? Why should we be anxious or careful, if all is anticipated and provided for by our heavenly Father. Let us rather exercise faith in God, consecrate ourselves to God, and manifest a growing love to the cause of God. And as God is so good, so faithful, and so true, let us direct

others to him, encourage them to exercise faith in him, and expect sufficient strength from him. My soul, I charge thee never to forget, or doubt, or disbelieve this precious promise; but as in all times past thou hast proved it true, go forward expecting to find it true even to the end! Holy Spirit, as the Remembrancer of the Lord's people, I beseech thee to bring this promise to my remembrance, in all seasons of weakness, in all times of trouble, and in the day and hour of temptation. And as the author of faith, I pray thee to work faith in my heart, that I may cordially believe it, confidently trust it, and at all times, in faith plead for its fulfilment, at the throne of God! Heavenly Father, I bless thee, I praise thy glorious name, for this precious promise—help me at all times to look to thee to make it good, and may I never dishonour thee by doubting either thy faithfulness, or love, or care! Precious Lord Jesus, as all the promises were confirmed by thy blood, are deposited in thy hand, and are made good through thy intercession, enable me to rely on thee, walk with thee, and openly honour thee, by believing always, and under all circumstances, that *as my days, so shall my strength be.*

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THE other night I heard a poor child cry bitterly, and its unfeeling mother was very angry; at length in a very angry tone she cried out, "What do you want?" It did not require much discernment to see what the little thing needed. I could have told her. It was hungry, and wanted food; it was cold, and wanted different clothing; it was filthy, and wanted washing; and it was weary, and wanted rest. As I went along musing, I thought that child is the picture of an awakened sinner; and the wants of the one resemble the wants of the other. Perhaps some poor, fretful, troubled spirit, may read these lines, scarcely knowing its own wants; or the eye of some one may alight upon them who has a child, or a brother, or some other relative, in a low, depressed, and sorrowful condition, and who is ready to cry out, "What do you want?" If so, I can tell you, as in the former case, the poor thing wants—

FOOD.—Food for the soul. It has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and has an appetite for spiritual provision. A deep inward

craving of spirit is felt, which nothing can satisfy but the bread of life. Christ, in his person, Christ in his work, and Christ in his love and power must be the food of the soul. To read of Christ, to think of Christ, and to commune with Christ, is to feed on Christ; and feeding on Christ revives, refreshes, and satisfies the soul. The poor, timid, doubting child of God is apt to get fretful; it wants to realize its interest in Christ, to enjoy the presence of Christ, and to feel the sweet constraining power of the love of Christ. The Lord's people should be well fed. There is plenty of food in God's Word, and in our Father's house there should always be bread enough and to spare. Let the Lord's servants always place plenty of living bread on the Lord's table, that if any of the prodigals who begin to be in want should come in, they may eat and be satisfied. And whenever we meet with any of the children of Zion, fretting, crying, and making their moan, let us hand them a little of this bread that they may eat and bless the Lord. They want not only food, but—

CLOTHING.—By nature we are clothed in rags; when first awakened, we try to clothe ourselves with fig leaves, or something equally unsuitable. But we are soon pinched with cold, and are ashamed to appear in public. The thought of appearing before God clothed only in our own righteousness, fills us with fear, and makes us cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" We not only suffer from

fear, but we begin to get a little taste, and want to appear at least decent, then becoming, and at length glorious. When we perceive the beauty of the robe of righteousness, and the comforting nature of the garments of salvation, we want to possess them, put them on, and wear them. And as they are provided for the poor, the destitute, and the naked, a hope springs up that we may possess them; then we apply for them, are clothed with them, and feel happy in them. Now we rejoice in the Lord, and our souls are joyful in our God. We no longer weep, or complain, or sigh; for we are warm, peaceful, and safe. Our garments not only shield us from cold, but adorn us; not only adorn us, but justify us. Weeping penitent! come to the wardrobe of Free Grace and be clothed. Naked sinner! come to Jesus, he will not only cover, but clothe; not only clothe, but adorn; not only adorn, but make you glorious. Believer, always appear in your best. Before God wear only the righteousness of Jesus; before men appear in the garments of sanctification, or exhibit the works and graces of the Spirit. They want not only clothing, but—

Cleansing. The Lord never puts the fine linen of his Son's righteousness on the person of a filthy sinner, simply to hide his pollution, and his shame; but he cleanses when he clothes; in the fountain which is opened for sin and uncleanness, by his word and by his

Spirit, he makes the polluted sinner clean, and he clothes and adorns those whom he has cleansed. Not only so, but however filthy the soul may have been in its habits, tastes, and ways, it imbibes at once a hatred to all uncleanness, and a love to all that is chaste, pure, and lovely. Nor are we merely cleansed once for all, but the fountain is always open, the laver is always full; and as we daily need cleansing, we can daily wash and be clean. Our wedding robe never needs washing, for it never soils, no spot or stain was ever seen on it yet; but our persons and our daily dress does, and we must wash and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. O precious fountain that cleanses from all sin, that takes out all stain, that removes every spot, that makes the most polluted to be as clean and as fair as an angel of light. Come then, ye poor, polluted, filthy souls, come to the fountain! Come, wash and be clean! Come, daily, and wash away your daily stains! Come, for you are welcome! Come, for the Lord wishes you to come! Come, be cleansed, be clothed, be fed! They want not only washing, but—

Rest. The Lord's little ones want rest. Burdened with guilt, laden with cares, and weakened with sorrows, they are weary. Weary of the world. Weary of sin. Weary of toiling at the law. Weary of living upon husks. Weary of themselves. Weary of almost everything, they need rest. They

have tried to find rest in duties, in ordinances, in something within them; but have been painfully disappointed. There is no rest for an awakened sinner anywhere but in Christ. He cannot rest until he realizes that he is safe. Could the manslayer rest while pursued by the avenger of blood? Can the porter rest while he carries the heavy load on his back? Can the excavator rest while working in the stiff clay? No more can a sinner, while he fears the wrath of God feels the guilt of sin, or strives to keep the law. But coming to Jesus, he removes the burden, rescues from the claims of the law, and satisfies the demands of justice. No bed of down was ever so soft to the labourer's weary body as the perfect work and precious promises of Jesus are to the poor law-condemned sinner. "Come," he says, "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And his rest is glorious. His rest is permanent. His rest is sweet. Weary sinner, come, O come to Jesus, and you shall find rest—soul rest, everlasting rest.

Had the crying child, who suggested these remarks been fed with wholesome food, clothed with suitable and sufficient garments, been cleansed from its filth, and been laid on a warm soft bed, its crying would have ended, and its rest would have been delicious. So sinner, so will it be with you, if you come to Jesus. He will feed you, and satisfy the

cravings of your soul. He will clothe you, and so clothe you that you will not envy an angel. He will cleanse you and make you perfectly clean. He will give you rest, sweet, soothing, refreshing rest, such as the weary weeping babe enjoys as it slumbers on the soft bosom of its loving mother. To Jesus then, to Jesus hasten, all ye hungry, naked, filthy, weary souls. To Jesus and he will—will what? Will, in one word, bless you with every blessing, and save you with an everlasting salvation.

Ye sin-sick souls draw near,
And banquet with your King,
His royal bounty share,
And loud hosannas sing;
Here merey reigns, here peace abounds,
Here's blood to heal your dreadful wounds.

Here's clothing for the poor,
Here's comfort for the weak,
Here's strength for tempted souls,
And cordials for the sick;
Here's all a soul can want or need,
Laid up in Christ, the living head.

But may a soul like mine,
All stained with guilt and blood,
Approach the throne of graee,
And converse hold with God?
"Yes!" Jesus calls, "Come, sinners, come,
"In mercy's arms there yet is room."

SIN AND ITS SENTENCE.

THE law of God is the standard of duty. What it requires must be rendered, or what it threatens must be endured. That law requires that we should be holy in heart and life, and that our holiness should be manifested by love. *Love to God.* That is, that we should esteem him more highly, than all his creatures. Reverence him profoundly and solemnly. Prefer him to every thing beside. Obey his commands with pleasure. Present ourselves before him as a sacrifice, surrender ourselves to him to be his servants, and consecrate ourselves entirely to his service and praise. It requires that God be first in our thoughts, in our affections, and in our desires: and pronounces every thing short of this, sin. But it requires, also, *love to our fellow men.* Every man is to be respected, honoured, esteemed. Every one is to be treated with courtesy, kindness, and affection. Our love to every one of God's intelligent creatures, is to be as great as the love we have for ourselves: and every thing short of this, is sin. Love to others, is to shine forth in our conduct towards them, as

our Saviour said, "Whatsoever ye would, that men should do unto you, do ye also so to them, for this is the law." Who then has not sinned? Who does not sin every day? And what is the desert of sin?

"*The soul that sinneth it shall die.*" God is the fountain of life, and we only really live, as we are living in union and communion with him. Now sin separates from God, and cuts off all fellowship with him; every sinner therefore, is said to be dead, because he is in a state of separation from God. Being separated from God, the sinner's doom is to be banished from God for ever. In a state of separation from God, the immortal soul, which proceeded from God, must be unhappy; and the degree of its unhappiness will be just in proportion to its realization of separation, and the impossibility of a re-union. At present, the sinner has no vivid realization of his separation from God, and re-union with God is possible, therefore he feels little or nothing about it; but in hell, where re-union is impossible, that realization will be dreadful. Which leads me to observe, that death as the penalty of sin, is not merely a separation from God, and the breaking off of all communion with God, but it includes direct and positive punishment, inflicted by God. This is represented by "devouring fire, and everlasting burnings;" by being cast into a "lake of fire and brimstone;" by the gnawing of an immortal worm, by utter darkness,

and being tormented by the devil and his angels. Every sinner is in danger of hell fire, of being eternally tormented in its flames, of suffering all the consequences of an eternal separation from God, and association with all the lowest, most degraded, and wicked of God's creatures.

But must every sinner thus die? He must, if the law is allowed to take its course. For God as a lawgiver, only requires, promises to reward obedience, and threatens to punish disobedience with death. To command, convince, and condemn, is all the law can do. But what the law could not do, God as a sovereign, has made provision for; in that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that he might render that obedience, which the law required; and offer such a sacrifice for sin, as would avail for the pardon, justification, and salvation, of all who believe on his name. Thus, while according to the law, the sinner *must* die; according to the gospel, there is no necessity that the sinner *should* die. Dying under the law, the sentence of the law must be executed; but if by faith in Jesus, we are delivered from the law, and come under grace, then according to the gospel, we *cannot* die; for Jesus has said, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." By believing, we accept of the Son of God as our substitute, and then all the merit of his life and death is placed to our account. His obedience unto death becomes ours: and

so, as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, many are made righteous. The Son of God was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. O the mystery of grace! The Son of God taking the sinners' place and responsibilities, that the sinner by faith in him, may be justified, and glorified.

Reader, you are a sinner, there can be no question about that; and as a sinner you deserve, and are doomed by the law, to suffer death. If you live and die under the law, you must perish—for the sentence of the law must be carried out, either in your own person, or in the person of another. There is no one that can be a substitute for you, but the Lord Jesus; and his substitution only avails for those who put their cause into his hands, commit their souls to his keeping, or which is the same thing, who believe on his name. How important then the question becomes, "*Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*" To you it is of infinite moment. Let me therefore beseech you to examine yourself, whether you be in the faith—whether Christ be in you—whether you are identified with Christ. If you believe on him, he is precious to you—you build on him alone for salvation—and expect acceptance in the sight of God, alone on the ground of what he hath done and suffered. In one word, if you are a believer, you take the perfect work of Christ

for your righteousness—you look to the intercession of Christ, as the medium of all blessing—and you take the holy life of Christ for your pattern and example: CHRIST IS YOUR ALL. How is it then, have you faith, or no faith? Oh, how much depends on your answer to this question, for "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; BUT THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM." John iii. 36.

Ye souls condemned by Sinai's law,
  And sunk in deep distress,
To Calvary look, and comfort draw
  From *Christ our Righteousness.*

This is the name by which he's known,
  The name his saints confess:
Gaze on him, humble soul, and own
  The Lord our Righteousness.

A title just, a pardon sealed,
  A spotless wedding dress,
Yes, grace and glory are revealed
  In *Christ our Righteousness.*

O, that my faith could Jesus claim,
  No more should doubts depress:
Fain would I triumph in this name,
  The Lord our Righteousness.

THE WAY TO BE WEALTHY AND HAPPY.

"They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."—Ps. xxxiv. 10.

To be in want is painful, especially to be in want of some things. Originally man had no wants, every thing was provided for him, and presented to him in abundance. But when man sinned, he forfeited his inheritance, and was reduced to poverty and degradation. Now want is common, it is universal. Where shall we go, to whom shall we speak, to find a person who has no wants? However many mistake wishes for wants, and while the Lord has promised to supply all his people's wants, he has no where promised to gratify all their wishes. Wants are painful enough, and oftentimes hard to be borne, but wishes are more so. Let us now,

Look at the painful condition of many. They are in want, and in want of good things. Some want good things for the body, as food, raiment, health, home, or friends. Poverty is a sore evil to the flesh.

It is a heavy cross. To a proud spirit, it is a crushing burden. But the number of those who want good things for the soul is greater. What multitudes there are who are condemned for sin, and need a pardon who have troubled spirits, who need peace—who have polluted hearts, and need purity—who have anxious spirits, and need pleasure—and who have aspiring minds, and want nobler prospects. For the want of these things, they are unhappy, they have no settled rest, no solid peace. And the worst feature of the case is, they know not their wants, or what is necessary to make them happy. If they did, they might soon be raised above their wants, for here we have,

The divinely prescribed way to rise above want. "They that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing." The way to be wealthy, is to seek the Lord, for the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it. If we would escape from want, we must *seek to know the Lord.* He has revealed himself in his word. He has manifested himself in the person and work of his Son. He discovers himself to the soul, by the teaching and operations of his Holy Spirit. It is not enough to hear of God, to think of God, to speak of God, or even to pray to God; but we must know God. Know him so as to yield the heart to him. Know him so as to confide in him, and delight to obey him. We must *seek to please him.*

Every thing we do, either pleases, or displeases, the Lord. Man by nature never troubles himself about pleasing God, but if the Spirit of God dwells in us, the grand end of life, and the principal aim in every action will be, to please God. The highest encomium that could be passed on Enoch was, that before his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Let us please God, and then it is of little consequence whom we displease. We should *seek to enjoy God.* God in Christ is the source of all real happiness. There is in God, every thing to make us happy. If therefore we know God, and seek to please him, we shall be made happy by him. His presence, his word, and his grace, will make us happy any where, and under any circumstances; and will enable us to say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth, that I desire beside thee." Seeking to know, please, and enjoy the Lord, we have,—

A positive assurance given us, that we shall not want any good thing. This assurance is given us by a man of experience and observation, who could say, "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread: he is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed." It was given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, and therefore may be implicitly depended on. Those who seek the Lord may be sick, or

poor, or tried, in a variety of ways; but the Lord will send them supplies, or give them the grace of contentment, so that they shall not want. How little we really want, therefore the apostle says, "Having therefore food and raiment, let us therewith be content." And again, "Be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." They shall not want *any good thing*. That is, whatsoever is really good for them at the time, and under the circumstances—or whatsoever will promote their holiness and happiness, shall be conveyed to them. Therefore with confidence we say, "Look to the generations of old, did ever any trust in the Lord, and were confounded." Or with the suffering Saviour, "Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted, and thou didst deliver them."

Those who seek the Lord are sure of supplies, for four reasons. First, the Lord *is able* to supply them. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Second, he *is disposed* to supply them. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Third, he has *promised* to supply them. "The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "My God shall

supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Fourth, he *always has* supplied them. Look at Jacob, at David, at all who have arrived in glory. If the question, put by the Lord Jesus, to his disciples, when they returned from their missionary tour, on which he sent them without purse or scrip, was put to them, "Lacked ye any thing?" Every one of them would readily answer, "Nothing, Lord."

As therefore we know not what is before us in this world, it is wise to prepare for the worst, to secure all good things; and as this can only be done by seeking the Lord, let us seek him at once, with all possible earnestness, and let us seek him always. If we seek him, he will be found of us. If we seek him, we shall know his will, prove the truth of his word, and enjoy his happy-making blessing. If we seek to know him experimentally, to please him universally, and to enjoy him as our chief good, he will shine into our hearts, giving us the knowledge of himself—he will visit us, sup with us, and smile upon us—he will shed abroad his love in our hearts, and confer foretastes of heaven upon us. And, O blessed testimony of our beloved Lord, who speaking to his Father said, "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

PRAYER FOR DIVINE TEACHING.

"That which I see not teach thou me."—JOB xxxiv. 22.

BY nature we are all ignorant of spiritual things. We know nothing that we ought to know. By grace we are prepared and disposed to learn. But if we learn anything to purpose, we must have a divine teacher. Man may teach the head, but God alone can teach the heart. And, blessed be his holy name, he has undertaken to teach us, for it is declared in his holy word, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." One proof that the Lord is teaching us is, that we discover our ignorance, are humbled on account of it, and become very anxious to learn. Then as Elihu says, we cry unto him, "*That which I see not teach thou me.*"

We know comparatively little at present. Little compared with what is to be known. Little compared with what some of the Lord's people know. Little in compare with what we are capable of knowing. We cannot give ourselves spiritual wisdom, but God can, and if we ask him in faith he will. Our knowledge and happiness are closely connected—for we

cannot enjoy what we do not know. Our knowledge and our usefulness, are closely connected too; therefore if we wish to be useful, we must pray to be taught. For our encouragement God has promised to teach, saying, "I will teach thee and instruct thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye." He has ever been the teacher of his people, and is still willing to teach even sinners. "Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way." How condescending in God, to become the teacher of his creatures—his simplest creatures! What love he displays in doing so, and how sweetly he thus manifests his paternal relation!

Let us, therefore, conscious, that at present we see but little of the glory of the law, or the grace of the gospel—of the character of God, or the scheme of salvation—of the work of the Saviour, or the kingdom prepared—of the operations of the Spirit—or the privilege of the saints—daily put up this prayer, "*What I see not teach thou me.*" This is God's way, he teaches gratuitously, but he will be inquired of. It is our duty therefore to sit at his feet, and plead for instruction. Nor should we only pray, but make use of all the means within our reach, expecting that our heavenly Father will teach us through them. Divine teaching is certain teaching. When God teaches us we know, we feel confident, and cannot be turned awa from what he has taught us. It is practic

teaching, for while it enlightens the head it sanctifies the heart; and sanctifying the heart, it reforms and improves the life. O to be taught of God!

Beloved, here is an example for our imitation, and in all our difficulties and trials, in all our sufferings and sorrows, let us seek to ascertain God's design, and submit to his will —and when at a loss to know why we are tried, or the end the Lord has in view, let us earnestly pray, "*What I know not teach thou me.*" Let us also be ready at all times to confess our ignorance, desiring further instruction, in order that we may more fully know the Lord, and the things that are freely given to us of God—so this inspired prayer will suit us, "*What I know not teach thou me.*" What a pointed reproof is here given to some of us, who fancying that we know much, make it manifest that we know nothing yet as we ought to know—and therefore need to be taught, by a discovery of our utter ignorance, the necessity of continually crying, "*What I know not teach thou me.*" Let then, the time past of our lives suffice that we have been willing to live in ignorance, or have too much depended on the teaching of men; and henceforth, let each one seek for himself, and also endeavour to stir up his brethren to seek each for himself a more thorough and experimental acquaintance with divine things, crying from the depths of the heart, "*What I know not teach thou me.*"

"THE LORD WAS MY STAY."

Ps. xviii. 18.

THERE are certain seasons, when it is most profitable to review the past; then we may do so not only with pleasure, but with profit. One of these seasons is, when we have obtained, and enjoy deliverance. The eighteenth psalm is David's song of praise, uttered by him before the Lord, in the day when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. Now his accusers were silenced, his fears had vanished, and his enemies were as still as a stone. Now he looks back upon his dangers, difficulties, and sore afflictions, and accounts for his progress and perseverance by the fact, that the Lord was his stay. Just so, aged believer, can you and I do. We too can look back, and at times wonder how it is that we are where we are, and what we are: how we have held on, and held out until now, but here is the whole secret of the case, "*the Lord was our stay.*" Let us meditate for a few minutes upon the subject. "The Lord was my stay,"—

WHEN? In the seasons of my greatest difficulty, in all my times of sorrow and danger, when filled with fears and doubts, when in poverty and deep afflictions, and when passing through the valley of the shadow of death. When all creature help failed us. When our hearts misgave us. When our enemies were just ready to rejoice over us. When our feet were almost gone, and our steps had well nigh slipped. In the darkest nights, in the dreariest days, on the mountain tops, and in the low vallies, the Lord was our stay. Our journey has been long, our road peculiarly trying, our hearts weak and our enemies strong, and long ago we must have perished in our afflictions, or been a prey to our foes, but the Lord was our stay. O for grace to praise and bless his glorious name, and to render again according to that which he hath done for us! But the Lord was,—

WHAT? "*Our stay,*" that on which we rested, against which we leaned. Our support, our prop, our defence, and our deliverer. When our hearts fainted, and all around us seemed to give way, we then stayed ourselves on his *word.* His precious word of promise, that he would never leave us, that he would uphold and strengthen us, and that as our day, so shall our strength be. We leaned on his *faithfulness.* That glorious feature of his character, which inspires the hopeless with hope, and the feeble with cou-

rage. Leaning on the arm of a faithful God we found support, and were enabled to press on our way. We looked to his *mercy*. That sweet attribute of his nature. His propensity to sympathize with the miserable, relieve the distressed, and hold up them that are falling. We, as well as David, can say, "When my foot was slipping, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." Then we reflected upon his past *goodness*, which had been so freely exercised towards us, and was so powerfully exerted for us; and on this we felt that we could rely, persuaded that having begun a good work, he would carry it on, and complete it. Also on his *unchangeableness*. For he is ever the same. Always in one mind. Without variableness. So, that, though our inward frames, and outward circumstances changed, and we were tempted to think that all things were against us, we had this to depend on, that our God is, what he ever was, and ever will be what he is. Then there was his blessed *covenant*, entered into with his Son before the world was. A covenant ordered in all things and sure. A covenant that anticipates all the wants, variations, and trials of time, and provides for them. A covenant, which is all our salvation and all our desire. This covenant has cheered us in many a stormy day, has comforted us in many a dark night, and has been our solace in many a wintry hour. But for the covenant, and its gracious provisions, where might we not

have been! But for the covenant, we had perished in our afflictions. Finally, *the relationship* into which God has taken us with himself; he is our Father, and we are his children. And because, that, like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, we have been enabled to stay our minds on him, and have enjoyed protection and repose. Yes, the Lord has been our stay, and we have been upheld, supported, and supplied, by his gracious word—immutable faithfulness—tender mercy—abundant goodness—unchangeable covenant—and paternal relationship. The Lord was our stay,—

How? On our part, we were enabled to believe his word, to hope in his mercy, to plead at his throne, and to meditate on his past dealings. On his part, he gave us his word of promise, not only putting it into his book, but into the hand of our faith. He gave us grace to trust in him, as our father and our God. He secretly imparted strength unto us, making us strong in the power of his might. He quietly led us forward step by step, and from stage to stage. And at length, he completely brought us out of every difficulty, danger, and trial; and will soon place us before his face for ever. We may well say, with the Psalmist, "If the Lord had not been on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick." But blessed be his holy name, he has been for us, and he has been with us, and it is having ob-

tained help from him, that we continue unto this day. We should have fainted under our burdens, we should have yielded to the temptations with which we have been plied, we should have fled before the foes, by whom we have been assaulted, but the Lord was our stay. To his free grace, to his inviolable faithfulness, and to his unchangeable love, we must ascribe, that we are where we are, and what we are.

The Lord, at times, knocks away every prop, removes away every stay, and leaves us himself alone, on whom to rely and depend. This experience is very painful, but it is very profitable. It is a great blessing to be brought off, and away from, every dependence, but the Lord alone. When we honour God, by trusting in him, he always honours us by supporting, supplying, and delivering us. The source of David's strength, courage, perseverance, and exultation, was the Lord, and the Lord alone; for the Lord was his stay; and so it must be with us, let us therefore look to him, trust in him, plead with him, and expect from him. In so doing, as in the past, so in the future he will be our stay; and often when heart and flesh are failing, will he whisper, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah, is everlasting strength:" and we shall have to say, "My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Let us then withdraw our depend-

those four words, for all he felt, and for all he did. He had confidence in God, he had peace in his soul, he had comfort in his afflictions, and all flowed from this fact, *Jesus died for him*. What a manifestation of love! Jesus dying for a poor day labourer. What a glorious way of salvation! Jesus dies, the just for the unjust. What a ground of confidence! for if Jesus died for the sinner, surely that sinner shall live.

Beloved, we do not sufficiently dwell upon this great truth. *Jesus died for us*. We do not by faith take it home, and realize our personal interest in it, and therefore we are seldom heard saying, "*He died for me*." Yet nothing more wonderful ever occurred in time, nothing so interesting or stupendous is to be found recorded on the page of history. They can tell of nothing greater in heaven. Indeed, the poorest believer can say of himself, something more surprising, than any angel can; for he can say of the Son of God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the joy of all the heavenly hosts, "*He died for me*." Let us seek to realize this great fact. Let us pray the Holy Spirit, to unfold it to the mind, and apply it to the heart. Let us meditate on it. Let us talk of it. For how can we doubt or fear—how can we repine or complain,—how can we envy others, or covet that we have not—if looking up to heaven, where Jesus sits on the right hand of God, or looking back to Calvary, we can say, "*He died for me*."

Jesus died for sinners. For the ungodly. For those who were without strength. For all who feel their need of him. For all who believe on his name. For every one who heartily wishes, or ardently desires an interest in his death. Yes, if I can from my heart say, "O that Jesus had died for me! O that I had an interest in his precious death!" Then there can be no reasonable doubt, but Jesus did die for me, and that I have an interest in his death. For such a desire springs from the Spirit's work in the heart, and proves that we feel the need of Christ, see the adaptation of Christ to our cases, and are willing to be saved by his merit and mercy. Now no one but the Holy Spirit, can bring a sinner to this. Nothing but the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart will produce this. Nor does the Holy Spirit take up his residence in any one, or work on the heart of any one, but those for whom Jesus died. As a rule, I am entitled to every spiritual blessing, of which I shall feel my need, and which I am desirous to receive and enjoy. As therefore I feel my need of Jesus, and desire an interest in his sufferings and death, I am warranted to say with confidence, "*He died for me.*"

But, *did Jesus die for us?* He did. Then how much we ought to think of him. Surely he ought never to be out of our thoughts. At home and abroad, by night and by day, in sickness and in health, we ought to be

thinking of Jesus. How glorious his person! How wonderful his love! How surprising his condescension! How dreadful his sufferings! How shameful his death! How glorious his resurrection! What a triumph his ascension to heaven! And this, all this for me! *Did Jesus die for us?* He did. Then how grateful we should be to him. How often and how heartily we should praise him. Surely, surely, we should sing of him, and sing to him. We should speak well of his name, and as he has commended his love to us, we should commend his love to all around us. How wonderful it is, that we do not speak of that love in all companies, and to all persons with whom we converse. If we speak of any one, we should speak of Jesus; and if we speak of anything we should speak of the love of Jesus. Yes, yes, this should be our theme, "*He loved me, and gave himself for me. He died for me.*" *Did Jesus die for us?* He did. Then we should scrupulously obey him. Every precept should be kept with care. Every ordinance should be observed according to the inspired pattern. Nothing should be considered unimportant, if required by him who died for us. Nothing should be spoken of as *non-essential*, if it will in any way honour his dear name. Obedience to Jesus, is the surest proof of our love to him; as he said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And again, "He that hath my commandments

and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Precious assurance this, that if I obey Jesus, because he loved me, and died for me, he will love me, and his Father will love me, and he will manifest himself to me. Holy Spirit, enable me thus to obey my beloved Saviour, and give me the sweet, inward assurance that Jesus loves me, and that his Father loves me, and that sweet manifestations of Jesus will be granted to me. I do desire, if I desire any thing, to see more of my Saviour's glory, to drink deeper into my Saviour's love, and more exactly and scrupulously do my Saviour's will. *Did Jesus die for me?* He did. Then let me adore him, pray to him, and seek to walk in close and holy fellowship with him. I would have my thoughts filled with Jesus—my desires, ever going forth after Jesus—my praises, always ascending to Jesus—and my soul live, in uninterrupted communion with Jesus. To him I would tell every grief, to him I would carry every sorrow, to him I would communicate every desire. Precious Lord Jesus, as thou didst die for me, thou hast an unquestionable right to me; and I wish thee to cleanse me, converse with me, employ me, and make me an instrument to glorify thee every day, every hour, yea, every moment. Never, never shall I be satisfied, until thou hast full possession of my

soul—until every power and faculty is fully and for ever engaged in glorifying and honouring thee. *Did Jesus die for me?* He did. Then let me be willing to suffer, and if need be, to die for him. Let me never wish to keep anything from Jesus. My sufferings for him, let them be what they may, are not worth a thought if once compared with his. Any sacrifice I can make for him is not worth naming, when I think of the sacrifice he offered for me. O the sweetness, the savour of those precious words, "Christ hath loved us and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour!"

Sinner, you cannot say, "*He died for me.*" And yet it is only by his dying that you can live. Except Jesus die for us we can never be saved. But no one can be justified in saying, "Jesus died for me," until the need of Christ is felt, and an application for salvation to Christ is made. Need a Saviour you do, but perhaps you do not feel it. Apply to Jesus to save you, you ought, but perhaps you do not. O that God the Holy Spirit may quicken you, enlighten your mind, and lead you as a poor, lost, wretched sinner to him for life and peace, and then you may say, and say with confidence and comfort, "HE DIED FOR ME."

THE HEART THAT CAN FEEL FOR ANOTHER.

THIS motto commends itself to every one at once, and each would speak approvingly of it. But there are many who are not influenced by it. Heathenism is opposed to it. Popery prevents it. The holy law of God requires it. The gospel and the grace of Christ produces it. Every Christian is supposed to have such a heart, and is required to manifest it, in all the walks of life. "See that ye love one another," is a divine injunction. "Love one another as I have loved you," is the Saviour's new commandment. Love is full of sympathy. It endeavours to relieve pain—to soothe sorrow—to supply wants—and to prevent danger. It will stoop—it will bend—it will suffer if it may but serve. In every class of society, we have many pleasing and affecting proofs of the power of love; but among what are called the lower classes, we often meet with the most striking manifestations of "*The heart that can feel for another.*

Old Mary Tomlin is very poor, and her bones are full of pain, but she has such a

heart. Her neighbour, Martha Sims, is very unwell, and that poor creature will go and tidy up her room, smooth her pillow, and speak kind and loving words about Jesus to her; and if ever she has anything nice sent her, which she thinks Martha could fancy, she is sure to save her a part. Many an hour's suffering has Mary prevented, and many a suffering hour has she beguiled away, by her christian conversation. She loves dearly to talk of Jesus, and tell a bit of her own experience; and a very rich experience she has to tell. She will first do all she can for her suffering neighbour, and will then sit down by her, wishing she was a good scholar, that she might read to her; but as she cannot do that, out of a well stored memory, she brings many a precious promise, and many a sweet verse of a hymn, so much so that Martha wonders where she can get them from. Mary has not got a long purse, or a learned head, but she has "*a heart that can feel for another.*"

Little Betsy Smith is but poor, but the grace of God has early taken possession of her soul, and as is always the case then, she wishes to be useful. She is not old enough to take a class in the Sunday school, she wishes she was. She cannot do so much that may be called work, to help the aged or the sick, but she is always ready to run on an errand for them; or do any little thing to add to their

comfort. She may often be seen too with her little testament, or some favourite book, sitting and reading beside poor widow Williams, who cannot read herself, nor often get out to a place of worship to hear the gospel. She also reads slowly and impressively, and does not mind going back and reading a passage over again, when the old lady has not caught the meaning, or does not exactly understand it. There are a great many things that Betsy Smith has not, but let her be short of what she may, she has "*a heart that can feel for another.*"

James Webb, poor lad, has a heavy, hard place, and has to work a great many hours. He always goes to bed thoroughly tired out on Saturday night, but he is almost sure to be at the early prayer meeting on Lord's day morning, and never misses meeting his Sunday school class, unless unwell or out of town. It grieves him to see lads growing up without being able to read the Bible. Often has he during the week, put the question to lads he has met with, "Do you go to a Sunday school?" and if they say they do not he at once begins to persuade them to go. Many a youth has he induced to enter the Sabbath school. Nor is he satisfied with seeing them at school, or reading the Bible, he longs and endeavours to lead them to Jesus. He knows more than one or two whom he has reason to believe has fled for refuge to the Saviour, through his instrumentality. His eye often

passes over the faces of the different classes, while the address is being delivered, to see if any impression is made, and if he sees any evidence of this, he is sure to find an opportunity to follow it up with an affectionate exhortation in private. James Webb is not wealthy, he is not very gifted, but he has "*a heart that can feel for another.*"

Henry Rogers knows and loves the Saviour, and he heartily wishes that every one also did, but he is not satisfied with merely wishing. He is a mechanic, and works hard all the week. Something often whispers to him, that he ought to stay at home and rest on the Lord's day, and he loves rest, and enjoys it too, as much as most men. But Henry can manage to talk for half an hour about the Lord Jesus Christ, because he knows and loves him; and he can speak very well of the sinner's state and danger, because he has been taught of God to know himself and his own natural condition. He has no great gifts, he often wishes he had, but then he says, perhaps he is better without them, for they might puff him up and make him proud. Well, there are several dark villages near the town in which Henry dwells, and on Lord's day evenings he visits these villages, and in the cottages of the poor tells of a Saviour's love. Many discouragements has he met with, much ingratitude has been shown him, often has he been tempted to give up, and stay at home and enjoy him-

self as others do, but he cannot bear to think of souls perishing in ignorance and sin, without making an effort to save them, and therefore he perseveres. He has been useful, and he is more useful now than he thinks he is; for God always honours such simple self-denying labours. Henry Rogers has little learning, small talents, and has but few advantages, but one thing every one that knows him will allow that he has, and that is "*a heart that can feel for another.*"

How many illustrations one might give of this motto, but enough they say is as good as a feast. And a friend of mine used to say, "Better send the people away longing, than loathing." Few books are too short, but very many are too long; and as with books, so it is sometimes with pieces, of which books are made up, therefore I will close this, but not before I have kindly put the question, Reader, have you "*the heart that can feel for another?*" Can you feel for your fellow creatures in want, and try to supply them? In pain and suffering, and try to soothe them? In poverty and privation and try to relieve them? Can you? Do you? Can you feel for your fellow sinners, who are in danger, and try to alarm them? who are in ignorance, and try to instruct them? who are careless, and solemnly warn them? Can you see sinners all round you, going to hell, and not pity them? Or, pity, and not wish to save them? Or, wish to save them, and not exert yourself to do

so? Ought you not to deny yourself ease, pleasure, and gratification, in order to save souls from death? If you can go to your own place of worship time after time, and pass your neighbours and acquaintances, who neglect God's great salvation, and despise their own souls, and not invite them, and try to induce them to go with you, can you possess "*the heart that feels for another?*" This, this is what we want in our churches, to influence and stimulate every member, that so each may use his own individual influence, and personally exert himself, to crowd the house of prayer, lead sinners to the Saviour, and snatch souls from the pit. In vain we write, preach, or profess, unless we have "*the heart that feels for another.*" In vain we long for a revival, boast of our orthodoxy, pride ourselves in our form of church government, or glory in our various societies, the thing we want, the thing we wish for, the thing we must have, before any thing remarkable is done, is for every individual member to possess, and know that he possesses, "THE HEART THAT CAN FEEL FOR ANOTHER."

BELIEVERS DEALT WITH AS SONS.

"God dealeth with you as with sons."—Heb. xii. 7.

Afflicted believer, listen. To you is this passage of God's holy word addressed. You have many trials, many temptations, and are at times ready to complain. But what are your trials compared with some that have gone before you? Read the preceding chapter, and see what faith enabled some of the Lord's people to do, and to suffer. And those directly addressed, were stripped of their property, expelled from their homes, and exposed to very painful privations. They suffered for Christ. They suffered with Christ. They suffered out of love to Christ. Their sufferings were not by chance, nor merely of men, the hand of God was in them, and they are told that by appointing, arranging, and limiting their sufferings, God is dealing with them as with sons. Beloved, as believers in Jesus, we are sons of God. What an honour! Let us try to get a little profit for our souls out of the passage, by considering,—

First, THE RELATIONSHIP. *Sons, sons of God.* Those whom he has adopted by his sovereign grace, and regenerated by his Holy Spirit. By the former act, he put us among his children; by the latter, he communicated to us his nature, and so constituted us his children. For as we receive a human nature from our natural parents, so we receive a divine nature from the Holy Spirit. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." We are not more the sons of our natural fathers by generation, than we are the sons of God by regeneration. Our natural parents stamp their image upon us, and we resemble them; and our heavenly Father stamps his divine image upon us, and we resemble him. As his children, he lays us in his bosom, manifests his love, and thus endears himself to us. He instructs us by his paternal voice, speaking to us by his providence, by his word, by his ordinances, and by his Spirit. He nourishes and feeds us at his table, which is constantly spread, with milk for the babes, solid food for the young men, and savoury meat for the aged brethren. He leads us by his Spirit, who conducts us from self to the cross from the world to the Church, and from earth to heaven. Every child is the object of special and unintermitted care, and is designed to perpetuate his name and honour both in earth and in heaven. Being his children we are his heirs, invested with the unsearchable

riches of Christ, and appointed to the possession of his infinite wealth. Being thus the children of God we must expect to be treated as his children; and being minors, and many of us mere babes, we must expect to be treated as mere children. We will look therefore,—

Secondly, AT THE TREATMENT. "*God dealeth with you as with sons.*" As sons who need discipline, as we all do. Some of us are conceited, and our pride must be humbled. Some of us are obstinate, and our wills must be subdued. Some of us are wayward, and we must be made meek and tractable. All of us are ignorant, and require to be taught, and there are many lessons, which we should never learn but by the rod. The Lord therefore deals with us wisely, according to our nature, disposition, and circumstances. Different children need different treatment, but all need chastisement, and therefore all receive it; for our heavenly Father never spares the rod, to the spoiling of the child. "*He dealeth with us as with sons.*" Sometimes he corrects by witholding from us, and then we are not indulged with his presence, with the tokens of his love, and the sweet assurance of his favour. Sometimes by taking away what we highly prize, it may be a beloved child, a wife, a husband, or the friend that is as our own soul. Or, it may be our health, our wealth, or our ability actively to serve his cause. Sometimes by set-

ting us difficult tasks, as he did Abraham, when he required him to sacrifice his son, and Jonah, when he commanded him to go and pronounce the doom of Nineveh. And sometimes by putting us to pain, sending bodily disease, or mental anguish, so that at times we choose strangling and death rather than life. In all our trials, troubles, hopes, and crosses, God is dealing with us, and dealing with us as with sons. Let this truth be impressed on our minds, and be ever uppermost in our memories. Bastards may be left unpunished, but legitimate children are always corrected.

Observe, then, tried and afflicted Christian, your heavenly Father loves you and notices you, therefore he corrects you. He sees you need it. That you would be ruined without it, and consequently out of pure love he sends it. Your Father intends to make you wise, holy, and useful. Solomon tells us, that the rod and reproof give wisdom, but the child left to himself bringeth his parents to shame. Our apostle assures us that God does not afflict us for his own pleasure, but for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. And we well know that it is the wise and holy believer that is the useful man. As therefore the rod prudently used makes wise and holy, and as the wise and holy are useful, if God intend to make us wise, holy, and useful, in dealing with us as sons, he will often use the rod. Your Father uses the family

rod, *not a new one*, your brethren have all felt it before, and many are smarting under it now. As says Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Again he assures them, "the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." 1 PET. iv. 12, 13. v. 9. Few of God's children ever entered heaven, without carrying the marks of the rod with them; for the Lord will visit our iniquities with the rod, and our transgressions with stripes. Let us then accept the chastisement of our heavenly Father as a proof of his love, and seek above all things else its sanctification; for if we accept of his chastisement, and improve it, it is a proof of sonship. Whenever we feel the rod, may we repair to our Father's throne, inquire the cause, and seek grace to overcome it; for when the child falls on his knees, with the tear glistening in his eye, and with tremulous voice begins to confess his faults, and ask for pardon, the rod soon drops from the Father's hand, and the kiss that testifies that all is forgiven is imprinted on the cheek. O for grace to believe, and realise under all our afflictions and trials, that GOD DEALETH WITH US AS WITH SONS!

"I SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN HELL."

A SHORT time ago, a man who now loves and adorns the gospel, was speaking to me of his former vicious life, and referring to an illness, which brought him down to the gates of death, he said with deep solemnity, "*Ah, sir, if I had died then, I should be in hell now.*" What a solemn thought this! And yet many of us in looking back, can remember seasons, when most clearly there was but a step between us and the burning lake. We seemed to totter on its brink, and the slightest accident might have plunged us in. But God in his mercy prevented it, and thus delivered our souls from the lowest hell. An immortal soul in hell, must be the most fearful sight in existence. If only one soul was there, and we were informed of it, how much it would occupy our thoughts. But there are millions there. We were *all but* there. We must have been there, if it had not been for the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, if we were in hell now, how dreadful it would be! In hell, no ray of cheering light is there! In hell, no drop of water is ever al-

l wed to cool the parched tongue there! In hell, there hope never comes, ease is never felt, mercy is never exercised, nor is deliverance ever enjoyed! And yet we were very near going to hell, at this moment we *might have been* in hell, how dreadful!

But suppose we were to die *now*, and die we must soon, where should we be five minutes after death? Have we a title to heaven? Every one knows, that it is folly to claim an estate, if we can show no title to it. And it will be the greatest folly to expect the inheritance of the saints in light, if we cannot show a title to it. Look to it, friends, look well to it, that you have *now* a title to heaven, for it will be the height of folly to expect to be admitted to it at death if you have not. Nor is it less foolish to think of going to heaven, if we are not prepared for it. There must be a qualification, before there can be any enjoyment. Heaven is such a pure and holy place, that nothing can be admitted into it, that is at all polluted or defiled. Only the pure in heart can see God with pleasure. Without holiness no one can see God with joy. Death or dying, makes no one holy. It cannot fit or prepare any one for heaven. If we are prepared at all, it must be before death comes. No one can prepare us for heaven, but the Holy Spirit, because we must be new created, or begotten of God, or born again; which expressions represent a thorough change of nature. "Except a man

be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The work of Christ for us, gives us a title to heaven; and the work of the Holy Spirit within us, makes us meet, or fit, to enter and enjoy heaven. No one can tell that he is interested in the work of Christ, but by the work of the Holy Spirit; or in other words, no one can tell that he has a right to go to heaven, but as he is made fit to go there.

What then should we, as immortal beings, as placed between heaven and hell, as surrounded by diseases, dangers, and death, do? We should make sure of heaven, and make sure at once. An accident may plunge us into hell at any moment, for we are all by nature prepared to go there; but no accident can raise us to heaven, only an interest in the Lord Jesus, can carry us there. We should therefore seek the Holy Spirit, which is promised to every one that asks for him; nor ever rest satisfied, until we have received him into our hearts, as the earnest of the inheritance, and are sealed by him unto the day of redemption. Brethren, a living faith in Christ alone, will apprehend and appropriate the title to everlasting life; and the possession and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit alone, will make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and which is reserved in heaven for all the children of God.

GOD'S WORK.

God has a work to accomplish in our world. It is a work worthy of himself, and will reflect the glory of his Divine nature, and sublime perfections. The plan was drawn in eternity, and time is set apart for the carrying it out to completion. It was begun early. It has been going on ever since. It shall be carried on to perfection. With an architect of such wisdom and wealth, failure is impossible. God's heart is in it—God's word is passed for it. God's eye is ever over it. And God's highest honour is to arise from it. Let us therefore rejoice, and work, and expect its consummation.

God can never want instruments. What he has not, he can create. What is not on the ground, he can bring to it. He always has provided the requisite means, and he always will. He is not dependent on any of his creatures. He made us to use us, and when he has done with us he will remove us. Every age requires appropriate means, and those appropriate means are always found. He set the machinery in motion, and he

keeps it in motion. Man may sigh and say, "Oh, that we had such and such and such instruments." But if God were to speak, he would say, "I have what I want, and when I want others I will provide them." We must not be proud, or think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. God can do without us. He puts an honour upon us, by condescending to employ us. We are only like the axe in the woodman's hands, or the saw that the carpenter is using.

Much of the Lord's plan is already carried out, but there appears to be much more to be done, before it is completed. Therefore, as the Lord works by us, and thus puts honour upon us, let us throw all our influence, and all our energies into his work. Let every Christian find out his appropriate sphere, occupy it, and do all in it that he possibly can for his Lord's glory. Let us so act now, that there may be no regrets at last. Let our motto be, "*Every one at it, and always at it.*" Not because we fancy that the work cannot go on without us, for that will make us vain, and is not true; but because we love our God, delight to please him, and wish to do all we can to make our fellowmen, the better for our existence.

Reader, have you a place in God's building? Are you at work for him? To serve God, is an angel's highest honour: and shall we shrink from it, or consider it a drudgery. If you are not busy for the Lord, begin at

once. If you are not active in God's service, it is quite time you were. Work, not for pardon, that is a free gift. Work, not for peace, that is only by faith in the blood of Jesus. Work, not for salvation, for that is alone of grace. But, receive the pardon, presented in the gospel; enjoy the peace, the blood of atonement speaks; obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, by faith in his name: and then work from pardon—work from peace—work from salvation—as an expression of gratitude, as a proof of love, and the legitimate effect of faith.

When Jesus for his people died,
The holy law was satisfied:
Its awful penalties he bore;
It can command, but curse no more.

He having suffer'd in their stead,
The law in covenant form is dead,
But rules them with a gentle sway!
And they, with sweet delight, obey.

Amazing love, how rich, how free!
That Christ should die for such as we!
From hence, the holiest duties flow
Of saints above and saints below.

A WORD FOR THE BLIND.

We live in an age of activity and usefulness. How many ways there are of doing good, and thereby at once of honouring God, and making our fellow-creatures happy. No one need be unemployed. There is work enough for all, and every talent God has given is necessary. How many evils we should avoid, how much happiness we should enjoy, and how much comfort we should impart to others, if we were daily carrying out the apostolic injunction, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith." Oh! that our hearts were filled with the love of Christ, and then we should lay ourselves out for the good of our fellow-men.

These thoughts have been awakened in my mind by a meeting which I have just attended. A meeting of the friends of a Society for teaching the blind to read at their own homes. We have asylums for the blind, and for teaching them to read; but it appears

that their doors are closed upon all that are above 25 years of age. Consequently all who lose their sight after that age, or have been neglected until that period, are given up to linger out the rest of their lives in ignorance and gloom. I was surprised to hear that we have 29,000 blind persons in our country, only about 2000 of whom can read. And I was equally surprised to hear that we have between 40 and 50 in our own town. A benevolent friend of mine last year, being here for a visit, induced some friends to take up the subject, and now at this meeting there sat a row of blind persons, with their books before them, capable, with more or less fluency, to read the word of God. Some of them did read to us portions of that blessed book, which is able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Many touching anecdotes were told us, showing the gratitude of those who had been taught to read; and also of the ease and quickness with which they learn by the use of Moon's raised characters. Some, at 70 years of age, had been taught to read the Bible for themselves, and others who had tried other systems, but losing heart, had given up the attempt, now in a short time, and with little difficulty, could read well. It was a most interesting, and I think profitable, meeting, and a good collection was made toward providing a lending library for the blind.

To me it opened a new source of gratification, a new means of usefulness, and a new way in which to honour the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now I should like to speak a word for the poor blind. Theirs is a sad privation. A life of darkness. They hear of beautiful objects, but never see them. They hear others read interesting works, but they cannot read them. To them, night and day, darkness and light, are alike. What a source of enjoyment, what a means of improvement, is opened to them when they are taught to read! More, what a means of grace is set before them, when they are enabled to read God's most blessed word. If Solomon would have us open our mouths for the dumb, surely he would have us also stretch out our hands to lead the blind. If we cannot open the eyes of the blind, as our beloved Master could, we can now teach them to read without eyes; and if we can, surely we ought.

My dear friends, look around you, are there any poor blind creatures in your neighbourhood? If so, could you not spare a little time, first to acquire the ability, which is easily done, and then to use that ability in teaching them to read of Jesus—that Jesus whom you love, and who is both able and willing to save their souls. We were told of a lady at Loch Lomond, who taught a poor blind man to read by giving him three lessons, when on a tour. And of a clergyman's wife, who taught a poor widow, who had been blind for 13 years, by the use of Moon's raised letters,

in two or three weeks. What a pleasure it must be, to a benevolent mind, to open such a source of enjoyment to a poor, dark, lonely fellow-creature! And what a comfort it must afford a Christian, if by such means, as has in several instances been the case, the souls of the blind should be won for Christ! My dear Christian friends, look around you, make inquiries about the state of the blind in your towns and villages, and see what can be done for them; do it for Jesus' sake—out of love to his dear name, and great will be your reward.

But before we close, we ought to remind each other, that we are all blind, in a spiritual sense, by nature—blind to our own state and danger—blind to our need of a Saviour—blind to the adaptation and glories of Jesus—blind to the real meaning of God's most holy Word. Our eyes must be opened by the Holy Spirit, or we cannot see the kingdom of God. We must be taught to read our own hearts, and to understand God's Gospel, and to confide in the Lord Jesus, or we cannot be saved. Have we experienced this change? Have the eyes of our understanding been enlightened? Have we been turned from darkness to light? Has God shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of His own glory in the face of Jesus Christ? Important questions these: the Lord help us seriously to consider them, and honestly to answer them.

A MEMORABLE DAY.

WHAT Christian, in looking back, cannot call to mind some memorable days in his history? I can recall many. I consider the day of my natural birth a memorable day; but of that, of course, I know nothing, but from others. But there is another day, and another birth, of which I have been thinking, more memorable to me by far. What a mercy it is to be "born of God," "born of the Spirit," "born from above!" and it is very blessed, when we can look back, and remember how the Lord met with us, renewed us in the Spirit of our minds, and saved us by his grace. In my case, grace, and grace alone can be seen. Never was one more unlikely to be called than me. Never did I appear farther from God, than on the day the Lord came near to me to judgment. O my soul, as I call to mind God's mercy, I charge thee to praise the Lord! And it was distinguishing grace, too, for one was taken and the other left; and it was the worst, and the most unlikely, that was taken. By the grace of God alone, I am what I am! As grace did the work, cf-

fected the change, and made me a new creature in Christ Jesus, let grace have all the glory.

At Old Brentford, Middlesex, on the 28th day of February, 1819, in a large room fitted up as a place of worship, might have been seen two lads, sitting together on the Lord's-day morning; an aged man occupied the little desk, to preach the word of God. A peculiarity of manner tickled the fancy of the lads, and instead of listening to the word, with a view to profit by it, they were employed in ridiculing and making sport of this aged servant of Christ. They went from the little sanctuary without remorse, hardened in sin and afar from God. In the evening of that day, the same lads were in the same place, but the desk was occupied by another, and a younger man. He was evidently from the country—a plain, unlettered man. His manner was solemn, his voice unmusical, but his message was Divine. After reading the Word, he prayed devoutly, and when the second hymn was sung, he arose and gave out for his text, Mark viii. 36, 37, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Solemnly did he speak of the value of the soul, of its danger, and the importance of seeking its salvation. The attention of the writer was arrested, the arrow of conviction pierced his conscience, and penetrated his soul. He sighed deeply, but unconsciously. He went

home sorely depressed in mind. He went to bed, hoping to fall asleep and forget all; but sleep fled away, and sad and distressing thoughts were his companions. He was filled with tossings to and fro, until the dawning of the day. When exhausted nature fell asleep, the mind found no rest, and in the morning he arose unrefreshed. That was a gloomy morning, and a distressing day, for the arrows of the Almighty were within me, and the poison thereof was drinking up my spirits. I tried to pray, but could not. I sunk in deep waters where there was no standing. Conviction was attended with temptation, and temptation almost drove me to despair. No human hand could extract that barbed arrow. No works of the creature could satisfy the enlightened conscience. Ignorant of the way of salvation, by simple faith in Jesus, the soul was groping in the dark, like the blind for the wall, until at last it came to the conclusion, "*There is no hope.*"

But as in nature, when the darkness is greatest, the light is nearest, so it was in this case; for when all hope that I should be saved was taken away, then Jesus was revealed, faith was wrought in the heart by the Spirit, and salvation by free grace was received and enjoyed. Faith in the atonement removed guilt from the conscience; and the application of the word chased away darkness from the mind. Instead of bitterness, there was now peace; instead of gloom, there was sweet

joy; instead of despondency, there was confidence in God. The trumpet of the jubilee was now sounded, the year of release was come. The debtor was freed from his obligations, the prisoner from his chains, and the bondslave from his thraldom. The feast of fat things was made, the table was spread, the head was anointed with oil, and the cup ran over. The darkness was past, and the true light now shined. The tempter fled, and the soul escaped like a bird out of the hand of the fowler. Oh, how precious was the Saviour now! There was music in his name, salvation in his blood, and true freedom in his service. Oh, how sweet was grace now! It was grace that arrested the criminal, and grace that brought the pardon. It was grace that wounded, and grace that healed. All was grace, free, sovereign, distinguishing grace. Never was creature further from God, or sinner less likely to be converted, than I was on that day, when the word came home with power. Never was soul in a more helpless or hopeless condition than I was, when the Lord passed by me, and in his love bade me, LIVE. At his word, death and darkness fled from me. At his bidding, I stood up a new creature. Truly, I was his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before appointed, that I should walk in them.

And now, forty years have passed away;

since that memorable day. Many have been the changes I have passed through, and many the trials I have endured. Satan has thrust sore at me that I might fall, the world has done its worst to lead me astray, but having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day. The life imparted so long ago was immortal. The change effected was permanent. The transformation was divine. The Lord who called me has kept me. The grace that renewed me has employed me. And being kept by the power of God, and used in the service of God, I wish to give all the glory of all that has been wrought in me, or done by me, to the grace of God alone. The Lord sought me, when I did not seek him. The Lord converted me, when I was mocking and insulting him. If ever sinner was unlikely to be called of God, I was that sinner. If ever creature was unlikely to be employed in the service of God, I was that creature. If, therefore, others can ascribe their change to free will, I cannot; I must ascribe mine to free grace. If any other man can take credit to himself, for any thing that is good, I cannot, for I never had a good thought, or felt a good desire, or did a good deed, but as the effect of God working in me, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Glory be to God the Father, for choosing me to eternal life in his beloved Son. Glory be to God the Son, for redeeming me by his most precious blood. Glory be to God the Holy Spirit,

for quickening me by his divine power, and translating me out of darkness into his marvellous light. Glory, glory be to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, as the author of my salvation, the source of all good, and the giver of every gift and grace!

And now, my soul, I charge thee, never let this day pass by without raising an Ebenezer to thy God; nor let any day pass without some effort to bring glory to his holy name, for his most free, powerful, and sovereign grace. Oh, what evils have been prevented, what blessings have been conferred, and what good has been effected, in my experience, by God's free grace! All I am, all I have, Lord, is thine. From thee I have received all, and to thee, and thy service, I devote all. Ere this—oh, awful thought!—ere this, but for grace, I had most probably been in hell! Ere this, I had degraded my nature to the lowest, and disgraced my name beyond recovery, but for the grace of God. How can I do otherwise than speak of grace, write of grace, and glory in grace, who am laid under such obligations to grace? It is wonderful that I do not prize it more, praise it more, preach it more, and glory in it more, than I do. But in heaven, in eternity, when I review all the Lord's dealings with me, and all the way the Lord has led me, I shall no doubt look back to the little sanctuary where he met with me, and the hallowed day when he called me, and with thrilling pleasure and

holy joy, praise, bless, and adore his holy name, for his rich and sovereign grace!

Reader, do you know anything of a change of heart, which always produces a change of life? Have you been arrested, convicted, condemned, pardoned, and set to work for God, of his free grace? Can you say, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears?" You must be born again, or perish. You must seek the Lord, or die in your sins. Every one is not stopped suddenly as I was; many are drawn gradually to the Saviour. How we are brought to Christ is of little importance; the question is, Are we brought to him? All are not sought out by grace just as I was; but no one ever sought the Lord but as the effect of grace; nor did any one ever seek the grace of God in vain. If you seek the Lord, he will be found of you, reveal himself to you, and save you with an everlasting salvation. And, never forget this, for it is a thought as full of comfort as of truth, that the very desire to seek the Lord comes from the Lord, and is a proof that he has a favour toward you. Never should we seek him, if he did not first seek us; and his seeking us is evidenced by our seeking him. Having loved us with an everlasting love, with his loving-kindness he draws us to himself; and as he draws, we run; nor can we rest, until we find rest in Jesus. Oh that the Lord would draw millions more, as he has drawn us, to the praise of the glory of his grace!

A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOUR.

God *must* be just, for justice is essential to his nature; but he is under no obligation to save, for salvation is an exercise of his sovereignty. Justice requires that every creature have his right, but no creature found in rebellion against God can in any sense claim salvation. If all had perished, God had remained infinitely just; and if any are saved, God must be just in saving them. His word must be kept. His law must be honoured. His justice must be satisfied. But if we have sinned, and God has said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"—if we have broken God's law, and that law must be honoured—if we deserve to be punished, and justice requires that we be so punished—then how can we be saved, and God remain just? This is a question that could never have been solved by us; if God had not solved it for us.

God would save us, and he could only save us in accordance with justice. In order to do this, he agreed to accept of a substitute, if one could be found who would undertake

to fill our place, honour the law in our stead, and satisfy justice on our behalf. The Lord Jesus undertook to do this. He therefore received us at his Father's hands, voluntarily engaged to be our surety, and become answerable for our debts. In order to this he assumed our nature, united it to his Divine nature, so that the Divine and human natures became one person, and that person became our substitute, and was answerable for us. Having volunteered to save us, he could not, he would not, give up our cause. He therefore obeyed the precepts of the law for us. He suffered the curse of the law for us. He met all and every one of the demands of justice for us. He not only made it possible for God to save us justly; but saving us through him, God gets a revenue of glory he had not otherwise had.

God, the just God, saves us. In his wisdom he devised and drew the plan of salvation. In his justice, he fixed and settled the terms of salvation. In his grace, he accepted of a change of persons, Jesus for us; and a transfer of obligation, so that our sins were placed to the account of Jesus, and his righteousness is imputed to us. In his mercy, he presents salvation to sinners who are miserable, lost, and wretched; that they may be saved gratuitously for the sake of Jesus. Thus justice and grace, wisdom and mercy, unite, harmonise, and shine forth gloriously, in saving sinners. God is just, and yet the

justifier of every one that believeth in Jesus. God is just, and yet he saves the unjust, the unholy, and the rebellious. God is just, and yet no coming sinner need be alarmed at his justice, or afraid of his wrath.

God, the God-man saves us. He really took our place, paid our debts, and suffered our desert. He procured our pardon by his own blood; our justification by his own righteousness; and reconciled us to God by his death. He commanded his servants to publish and proclaim among all nations, in every language spoken by men, that he is able to save to the uttermost, and is willing to save all who are willing to be saved by him. He sends his Holy Spirit to attend that word, working faith by it, and bringing sinners to his feet through it. He gives the grace of repentance, and men change their minds, are sorry for their sins, and reform their lives. He gives the grace of faith, and men look to him, trust in him, and receive from him saving grace. He gives the remission of sins, and men enjoy peace with God, reconciliation to God, and are acknowledged as the sons of God. In a word, he gives a free, full, and everlasting salvation, and all of grace. He will consequently, at last, present the whole church faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

Reader, do you understand God's method of salvation? Many seem to have very obscure and indefinite views of this great sub-

ject. They talk of being saved by Christ, and through Christ, but appear to have no clear and distinct views of the substitution of Christ. They see not that God's justice has received all its demands, and can therefore make no demand on them, if believing in Jesus. They see not that the law has been fulfilled, and so fulfilled as to be magnified and honoured, and therefore it has no curse to vent on them, no objection to raise to their present justification, or eternal salvation. They see not that God's inflexible justice, and every other perfection of his Divine nature, are glorified in their salvation. In consequence of this, they have no settled peace of conscience, no strong confidence in God, no joyful hope, no triumphant anticipations: but they hang between hope and fear, doubt and faith, gloom and joy. Primitive believers realized that Christ represented them, acted for them, and had carried their cause into the high court of heaven; and they realized too, that Christ was in them, the hope of glory; their realization sprung from faith, and they were exceeding joyful in all their tribulations, they carried about with them the consciousness that their sins were forgiven them, and therefore lived in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

WORDS AND DEEDS.

Words and deeds should go together, but they do not always. Some speak well, but they seldom act well. Others act well, but say little. The latter are greatly to be preferred. However, when a man speaks wisely, and acts consistently it appears best. It is folly to expose people's faults, except with a view of correcting them, and preventing others falling into the same. How very few like to be told of their faults, and how difficult it is to speak to them in the right way. There are some who never know their own features, or recognise their own failings. The portrait may be life-like, but they do not know it, or will not own it.

I knew a deacon of a country church, who was a striking illustration of the fact, that words and deeds do not always go together. He generally prayed in public, if present at the prayer-meeting, but who ever expected to hear him say, Amen, until he had given utterance to the words, "*We must be up and*

doing." Very excellent words these. They plainly point out our duty, and refer to the spiritual wants of the neighbourhood—of the world. But who ever saw that deacon rising from his seat, to take the lead in any high and holy enterprize? Or, whoever, under any circumstances, found him with a heart glowing with sympathy for man, or zeal for the glory of God. Not only so, but he did not like to see others too active. He was for keeping the waggon in the same rut, and travelling at the same pace as his forefathers did, before railroads were in fashion. The articles and discipline of the church, the form and order of the services, the matter and manner of the sermons, should all be the same. Not only was it his opinion, that all changes are not improvements; but judging from his conduct, he must think that no change could be an improvement. Brother Thomas, let me advice you to drop your favourite sentence, or else carry it out, "*Be up and doing,*" or say nothing about it, for people notice it and make their remarks. Not that the remarks of our fellowmen are of much importance, but the Lord also hears it, and expects you to do as you say.

The same worthy, had another favourite saying, which was always employed when an application was made for money, to help another cause, or send the gospel to the heathen. Whoever applied would be sure to be told, "*Charity begins at home.*" And so it did,

for if charity means love, self was the object loved. Or, if it meant giving of our substance, it was pretty much the same, for all was laid out on self, or laid up for self. Charity did begin at home in that quarter, and staid at home too. If he was urged to contribute, he had another trite reply ready, "*We must be just before we are generous.*" Quite right if properly applied. But if the Lord requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves; and like the good Samaritan, show mercy on him; then it is just to give of what we have to help others, instead of hoarding it up for ourselves. True charity manifests itself by endeavouring to make all at home happy, nor only so, it breathes benevolence and good will to all, and is ready to exert its influence, or give its property, for the benefit of any part of the human family, up to the highest point of its ability. Justice requires, that we should live for others, as well as for ourselves; and when we cannot find a law to compel us to act, generosity steps in, and constrains us to act from another principle.

Covetousness is never at a loss for an excuse. Selfishness can always plead its own cause. Therefore we find selfish and covetous professors always ready to remind us, that "*we must be just before we are generous;*" and informing us, as if we had never heard the important truth before, that "*charity begins at home.*" Brethren, our hearts are

fearfully selfish. Self-denial, though so plainly inculcated in the word, and inculcated for the benefit of others, is but little attended to. Each professor, thinks that his fellow should practice a little more self-denial, be a little more generous, and "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," but is not prepared to start first, and set the example. We ought to "*be up and doing,*" and not merely talk about it, for the world and the church alike requires activity and devotedness to God. Let us then see to it that our words and deeds go together. Let us do as we say. Never let us, by our prayers, give those about us, occasion to reflect upon us; or to use the language of our Lord, respecting the Pharisees, when speaking of us, "*They say and do not.*" O Lord, there has been too much hypocrisy and pretence about us, correct us, reform us, and make us like thyself, of whom it is written, he "*went about doing good.*"

Brethren, let us freely offer;
  All we have is from above;
Let us *give*, and *act*, and *suffer*;
  What is this to Jesu's love!
Did he die our souls to save?
Then we're his, and all we have.

"MY FATHER KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT."

A SHORT time ago, three boys were busy discussing some question, as they went along the street, and it appeared to interest and excite them very much. At length one of them, a shrewd sharp little fellow, full of life and fire exclaimed, "*My father knows all about it!*" He was evidently pleased with the idea of his father's knowledge, if he was not proud of it. How much we may learn from children. How much better it would be for us, if we were more childlike. Oh, that we realized more fully, that God is our father, that he is interested in all that concerns us, and that we are interested in, and shall be benefitted by all that is known or possessed by him! How it would calm the mind, soothe the troubled heart, and embolden the timid spirit.

There is my friend George Hall, he finds the dispensations of divine providence exceedingly trying. One loss succeeds another, until he is ready to conclude that the

last penny will go. Business is flat, and dark dense clouds hang over him. In his domestic circle, his house is not with God as he has prayed and desired. Sharks and sharpers, have got hold of him, and he feels confounded, and wonders where the scene will end. He often finds comfort in the means of grace, in the word of God, and in secret prayer; but the clouds return after the rain. At times his heart is ready to burst, his intellect seems to reel, and he cries out, "Lord, why is this?" There appears to be no bright light in the cloud, or rainbow in the storm, but all is dark, dreary, and depressing. Brother George, "*your father knows all about it.*" It is in all his plan, and forms part of his purpose. If you are taken by surprise, he is not. He has fixed the end, an end worthy of his wisdom, mercy, and love; and has arranged all the steps that lead to that end. If you could but see his entire plan, you would be perfectly satisfied; more, you would be delighted at the wisdom and goodness, displayed in it. Your present trials, are but answers to your prayers, they form a ladder, up which you pass step by step to glory. They weary you, but your weariness will only prepare you for the rest, that remains for the people of God. They wean you from the world, and it is necessary you should be weaned, that you may be glad to go home when you are sent for. In the well ordered covenant, strength for the day is

provided, grace sufficient for you is laid up, and an expected end is fixed. Your good is secured. Not only at the end, but by the way. Hence it is written, "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God; to them that are called according to his purpose." Courage, then, brother, "*father knows all about it;*" and having loved us with an everlasting love, having put us among his children, he will not allow anything really to harm us!

Samuel Adams, has got meddling with the deep things of God, and is more taken up with philosophy, than with the facts and plain statements of God's most holy word. He is in the whirlpool of mystery, trying to unravel by reason, what is to be simply received by faith. He wants to reconcile man's responsibility, and God's sovereignty. To arrange all the doctrines and duties of Christianity in nice order, and make out a complete system. But he cannot do it. One part will seem to clash with the other, and now he feels inclined to strip God of his adorable sovereignty, and then to reduce man to a mere machine. Friend Samuel, "*your father knows all about it,*" but you do not. The Bible is God's book, it contains all that he has been pleased to reveal. There are in it, things which angels do not fully understand. The most important, is the most plain. The way of salvation is so simple, that the wayfaring man, though a fool,

shall not err therein. Clusters of comfort hang so low, that the least child in God's family can reach them. The streams of consolation flow so gently, and so near, that any thirsty soul can drink of them. In the valleys are all manner of trees for food, enough and to spare; and every one can pluck and eat. On the hill top there are also some precious fruits, but the sides are steep, the height is great, and the light there is dazzling; so that few comparatively can reach the summit, enjoy the views, and relish the productions. Looking up from below, we cannot trace the entire road, or see clearly the connection of the parts; and looking down from above, we cannot perceive the harmony of the great whole. We can see something of the top from the bottom, and we can see the bottom from the top, but much that is intermediate we must leave. "*Our father knows all about it,*" but we must be satisfied to know in part at present; looking forward and expecting, that when that which is perfect is come, then shall we know, even as also we are known. Let it comfort us to think that our father knows the whole, and that he will make all plain to us by and bye: and in the confidence of this, let us be satisfied to believe, what we cannot harmonize, if it is clearly stated in God's blessed word.

Anthony Ottway is very much tried by a class of men who seem determined to do him

all the injury they can. Their designs are against him for evil, and their plans are cleverly drawn. He appears to be like the bird in the snare of the fowler, and how to extricate himself he cannot tell. He is almost weary of his life, and is often tempted to cry out, "O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest." He has called upon God, but obtains no answer. Again and again has he expected deliverance, but has been disappointed; and now, like David, he is ready in a fit of unbelief to say, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death;" or a step between me and ruin. Fear not, Anthony, do not give way to despondency, "*your Father knows all about it:*" he will turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. He will make a way for your escape. He will appear to your joy, and every enemy shall be confounded. He knows their designs against thee, his eye is on the plans they have formed to injure thee, and he will curb their tongues, control their passions, blast their purposes, and overrule all for your good. There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, or conceal their purposes from his eye. Therefore wait on the Lord, trust also in him; and he will appear for you; then they who are your enemies shall see it, and be ashamed, and shame shall cover them that said unto thee, "*Where is the Lord thy God?*"

Beloved, the perfect knowledge that God hath of all objects and subjects, of all that hath been, is, or can be, is a subject full of comfort to us, for he will certainly employ his knowledge, as well as his wisdom, for our welfare. Our heavenly Father knows all about us, our tempers, dispositions, and infirmities. He knows every good desire, and every evil inclination; our conflict with corruption, and our struggling with our foes. He knows all the persons and circumstances by which we are surrounded, and the varied influences to which we are exposed. Every enemy plans, purposes, and schemes against us, under his eye; and he says, "I will frustrate your plans, and cross your designs, for whereas you think to do them ill, you shall really do them good." Every loss occurs under his eye, nor can a penny go without his permission; and though we may think we have not enough, he considers that we have just so much, too much, as he allows us to lose. Therefore, as to the dark things of his providence, and the deep things of his grace, let us leave them to him, believing that all is right, and attend to his loving admonition, "O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him!" Gracious Lord, fill us with humility, that we may yield to thy providence, bow to thy word, and believe in thy love, happen what may!

THE HOME OF MY HEART.

I HAVE just been charmed by hearing a young lady sing a beautiful hymn, the burden of which is, "My home is in heaven, my home is not here." This has set me musing, for I am pretty much of a home bird. I was never very fond of travelling, and as I get old, I like it less and less. I can enjoy a short visit, but I do not like long ones. To me there is no place like home. The dear old scenes, and the familiar old faces, are far more pleasant than fresh ones. Still, the best, the happiest home on earth has its defects. It is not all we wish. We cannot shut out all the disagreeables. Nor can we bring in all that is desirable. We cannot find perfect enjoyment, nor do we enjoy full satisfaction. The poet has well said, "Full bliss, is bliss divine." In the happiest home, there are some wants; and in the most satisfied bosom, there are some wishes. Where is the family in which there is not an Absolom, or a Dinah? Where is the house into which disease and death cannot enter? In a few years, how changed our houses become!

Well, our home, as believers in Jesus, is not here. The *home of the heart* is where Jesus is. Our home, our Father's house is above.

Let us then think of heaven as our home. There our heavenly Father dwells, unveils his glory, displays all his love, and places at the disposal of his children all the riches of his grace. There the whole family meet. The Church of the first born. There, as the Apostle speaks, is Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all. Our elder brother, our beloved Saviour is there. The holy and ever blessed Comforter is there. The Cherubim, the Seraphim, all the elect angels, and every holy and happy spirit redeemed by a Saviour's blood will be there. What glorious society! We shall become acquainted with all. We shall enjoy the company of all. We shall love all. We shall be in the closest union with all. There will be no shyness, no strangeness, no distance there. There will be no empty seat, no vacant place, no missing one there. The whole family, every brother and sister, will be there. All holy. All happy. All at home, and at home for ever. O sweet and blessed home of the Lord's family!

There we shall be free from all that burdens the mind, tries the temper, agitates the nerves, or depresses the spirits. There we shall be free to worship, to serve, and enjoy God without interruption. There we shall be familiar with the Patriarchs and Prophets,

with the Apostles and Martyrs; with all who have lived for Christ, and died for Christ on earth. There we shall have a right to be, and to be there for ever. It will be our *own home*. The *kingdom* prepared for us, before the foundation of the world. The *place* prepared for us by our beloved Lord and Saviour. There all will be simple and sincere, no polite deception, no mere pretence will be there. All will be bright and beautiful; nothing dreary or unsightly there. All will be joyous and blissful, neither tears nor sorrows there. What will it be to realize freedom from all pain, all fear, all sorrow, and all sin; possessing at the same time the deep inwrought assurance that we are free from all these things for ever! O blissful prospect! O glorious anticipation!

Yes, heaven is home, *the home of the heart*. All the objects of the heart's love are there. All the objects of the heart's desire are there. All that can feast and delight the heart is there. I will therefore endeavour henceforth to think of heaven as my home, *the home of my heart;* nor expect to find a home to satisfy me, until I arrive there. Without holiness, without love, without peace, without Jesus, no place would be home to me. But in heaven all are holy—in heaven love is perfect—in heaven peace reigns—in heaven Jesus dwells, is seen, and heard, and enjoyed for ever. Let me, therefore, when called to suffer privation, or endure temptation, or

pass through affliction; remember that I am but a stranger and a sojourner below, that "my home is in heaven, my home is not here." Nor let me ever expect long to dwell at ease, or to be free from trouble, until I reach *the home of my heart*. Father of mercies, I bless thee for providing such a home, for such a sinner as me! Saviour, Jesus, I praise thee for procuring me a title to such a home, by the labours of thy life, and thy sacrificial death! Holy Spirit, I adore thee for thy gracious work, which is meetening and preparing me for that blissful home, where I shall be holy and happy for ever!

I'm but a stranger here,
Heaven is my home:
Earth is a desert drear,
Heaven is my home:
Danger and sorrow stand,
Round me on every hand:
Heaven is my father-land,
Heaven is my home.

What though the tempest rage?
Heaven is my home:
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heaven is my home:
And time's wild wintry blast
Soon will be overpast;
I shall reach home at last;
Heaven is my home.

THE FATHER'S DIRECTION.

THE parent was carrying his child, and the little prattler delighted his ear and his heart. But his arms got weary, and he put it down to walk. It was put forward that the father's eye might watch it, and the father's hand defend, or catch it, if needful. It soon turned to look back, when the parent said, "*There, look where you are going.*" Look before you, not behind. Look forward, not backward. How frequently we need such an admonition! How prone we are to look back, as if we doubted whether our father had not left us to ourselves. Or, as if we were afraid to go forward. But there is a race set before us, and we must run it. There is a goal to be reached, and we must reach it. There is experience to be gained, and we must gain it. A voice may be often heard behind us saying, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" The father's advice to his child, we may apply to four classes.

YOUNG CHRISTIAN, "*look where you are going.*" There are snares in your path, dangers in your way. Keep your eyes open, and let them look right on, or before you are aware, you fall. Temptations will assail you

on every hand. If invited to the theatre, or ball room, or concert, or dance, or to join the pleasure party, "*look where you are going.*" Ask yourself the question, Will the Lord go with me? Or, will the Lord smile upon me there? Or, shall I honour Jesus by going? "*Look where you are going,*" lest you grieve the Spirit, wound the cause of God, or lay a stumbling-block in the sinner's way. There is no neutral ground, it either belongs to Jesus, or to Satan; and if you venture on Satan's ground, you give him occasion against you, and power over you. Seek happiness in God. Expect pleasure in doing good. Never let it be said, that you were obliged to seek pleasure in the world, or in carnal things.

PROSPEROUS PROFESSOR, "*look where you are going.*" Business is increasing, trade is flourishing, and you are making money. You will soon be tempted to change your style of living, to relax in your attendance on the means of grace, and to allow less time for the exercises of the closet. If you yield, you will soon lose your tenderness of conscience, your zeal for God's glory, and your sympathy with the Saviour. If you retain the forms of religion you will lose the life and power, and become formal. Beware of making haste to be rich, or you will be betrayed into rash speculations, or launch out into business beyond your depth, and come very near to the whirlpool, which drowns men in

destruction and perdition. "*Look where you are going*," or you will go into the world, and become worldly; and instead of testifying unto it, that the works thereof are evil, you will give it reason to believe that it is in a good state. Jesus prayed, that his people might be kept "from the evil" of the world; and Paul exhorted the Corinthians, to come out of it, and be separated from it.

AGED BELIEVER, "*look where you are going*." You are very near home. Your Father's house is just before you. A few more steps and you will stand before the gates of glory. The wilderness is all behind you, you have only to cross the Jordan, and you will enter into the promised land. Be not anxious then about anything earthly. Set your affections on things above. Keep your lamp filled with oil, and the flame bright and clear. Keep your ear open and attentive, and listening for the Master's call. Realize his presence with you, rest on his promise to support you, and anticipate the pleasure of being for ever with the Lord. "*Look where you are going*." You are going where there is no sin, no sorrow, no pain. Where there are no foes to alarm, no fears to trouble, no wants to pinch. You are going where Jesus reigns, where angels worship, where saints are perfect, and "God is all in all." There will be no weary body there, no tempting devil there, no distress of soul there; all will be ease, holiness, and happiness.

SINNER, "*look where you are going.*" You are in the path of danger, and in the road to death. You are wandering from God, and are going down into the pit. Every step you take, every moment you live, your danger is greater, you are nearer to hell. Satan binds you faster, sin makes you harder, and the world entangles you more fully in its web. You are warned, that you may be saved. You are alarmed, that you may escape. You are within a step of Jesus, in one direction; take that step, and you are saved. You are within a step of hell, in another direction; take that step, and you are lost for ever. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will deliver you from the wrath to come; live in unbelief, and you must perish for ever. Jesus is the only way to the Father, the only way to heaven; walk in him, and you will come to the Father on the throne of grace now, and you will come to him on the throne of glory soon. But, if you remain where you are, and what you are, you must perish, and perish for ever. If you make up your mind to go to hell, you need not trouble yourself, let things take their course, and no doubt you will reach that fearful place: but if you wish to go to heaven, you must strive for it, as Jesus said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Strive and you shall enter, and entering be saved.

A DUTY.

ISRAEL were a peculiar people, the type of the Lord's people, whom he hath chosen for himself. Their privileges represented ours, and many of their duties pointed out what we should do. God's worship was to be sustained by them, and God's poor were to be supplied by them. They were required to be liberal, and to contribute to the cause of God, every one according to his ability. The language of Moses speaking as the mouth of God is very explicit. "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God upon him." Deut, xvi. 17. Wealth comes to us from God's providence, it lays us under obligation, and imposes upon us important duties. God gives us temporal things, to enjoy a part thereof ourselves, to help to make others happy, and to carry on his cause in the world with the rest. The words of Moses to Israel, are strictly applicable to us, and therefore let us look at them a little more closely.

Jehovah, is the Lord our God. We are in covenant with him, and he is in covenant with us. He has taken us to himself for a people, and we have avouched him to be

our God. Many have no God, therefore they live godless lives. Many worship an idol, and are influenced thereby. There is more idolatry in England at this day, than there is true christianity. But, blessed be God, he has *revealed* himself to us in his holy word, in the person of his Son, and by the light and teaching of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We know him and therefore we love him, worship him, and make him the object of our trust. He has not only revealed himself to us, but he has become *engaged* for us. In the everlasting covenant, and by the promises of his holy word, he has engaged to take us to himself for a people, and to be to us a God; working for us, and bestowing upon us, all that we really need. He has engaged to be our Father, providing for us; our Friend, walking with us; and our God, defending and protecting us. Nor only so, he is *enjoyed* by us. Our God is the source and centre of our happiness. He maks us happy, by manifesting himself unto us, conferring his grace upon us, and shedding abroad his love in our hearts.

We are the Lord's people. His *peculiarly*. Not only his by creation, as all others are; but his, as chosen from among others, and set apart to be his portion, his heritage, and his praise. He lays claim to us as his children, his flock, his purchased people; whom he has formed for himself, loves as his own, and has redeemed by the blood of his Son.

We are his *entirely*. He claims both body and soul. Every faculty of the soul, every sense of the body; every talent we possess, and every gift we exercise, is his. He holds us responsible for the use of them, and expects us to glorify him in the exercise of them. We are his *eternally*. He will never part with one of his people. Not one of them is lost. Not one of them ever will be. He watches them with his eye, holds them in his hand, and guards them with his constant care. He leads them out of nature into grace, and then from grace to glory.

The Lord blesses us, as his people. He blessed us *in Christ*, with all spiritual blessings; even as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world. He gives us blessings *through Christ*, whom he has constituted the medium and channel, through which all passes from himself to us. He gives us blessings *by Christ*, in whom all fulness dwells, and out of whose fulness we receive, and grace for grace. All our blessings pass through the hands of our dear Lord and Saviour. He gives us spiritual blessings for the soul, temporal blessings for the body, and eternal blessings for both. He gives us blessings the most costly, the most suitable, and sufficient. He blesses us like a God: according to the largeness of his heart, the immensity of his wealth, and the infinity of his wisdom.

Being blessed of God, he requires us to be

a blessing to others; of what he has given us, we are to give to them. His poor are to be supplied, and his cause is to be supported. Observe the duty, "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God upon him." None are excepted, but all must *give*. The widow her two mites, the labouring man his pence, and the rich man his pounds. "*Every man should give.*" All are regulated. "Every man shall give *as he is able.* That is up to his ability. Not merely his redundancies, but a part of all, a due and proper proportion. Our ability is the rule of our benevolence. Many render themselves unable, by their costly style of living, by their expensive mode of dressing, and by their indulgence in carnal pleasures; for this they must account to him, who requires them to give, in proportion, to what he has given them. God *knows* what we have, he *requires* of us as he has given to us, he *observes* whether we regard his word, and give a due proportion, and he deals with us accordingly. He has said, and he carries out his word, by his providence, "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." 2 Cor. ix. 6. Many a professor, who has kept back God's rights, and slighted God's requirements, has wondered at his losses, and been surprised that he could not succeed; but one text would clear all up to him if he would but consider and believe

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty. "This duty is intended to *prove* us, if we are sincere in our professions of attachment to the Lord's cause; and to *improve* us, for we are blessed in giving, and made better thereby. The regulation also is most reasonable. There is something for every one to do, and every one should do his part; each is required to give, and every one should contribute his portion.

God loves to give, and therefore he created receivers; only receivers, for all his creatures receive, and receive their all from him. The Lord Jesus loved to give, and therefore he never refused an applicant; but said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He loves to see his children like himself in this particular, and therefore we read, "God loveth a cheerful giver." He has given the command, "Every man shall give as he his able;" he has set the example, giving us life, and breath, and all things; he affords us opportunities, and says, "As ye have opportunity, do good;" and he has given a promise, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." The Lord Jesus carries out the requirement, when he meets with his people, for he never appears among them empty, and he gives as he is able, as the Lord his God, has blessed him. Beloved, let us be liberal, especially to God's cause. It is the way to thrive, for "the liberal shall be made fat." It is the way to

provide for the future, for Paul calls it "laying up in store:" hear his words in reference to the rich, which qualified by our subject will apply to all, and each of us, "charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. vi. 17—12. Let us then, seek grace from the Lord, to carry out this duty; and looking upon ourselves as God's stewards, take heed that we do not waste, or unlawfully hoard, our Master's goods. If the Lord's poor apply to us, he sends them. If the Lord's cause appeals to us, he speaks in that appeal, and he only asks for his own. No niggardly professor, should ever expect to be happy. No wasteful professor should ever expect to succeed. But the liberal soul shall be made fat, and while others are in straits, God will see to it that he has enough.

VAIN THOUGHTS.

"How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?"—JEREM. iv. 14.

WE are very much influenced by our thoughts. Habitual and cherished thoughts, shew the state of the heart, and regulate the feelings and the conduct. Thoughts suggested and resisted, are not ours, nor are we accountable for them. But thoughts, however we become possessed of them, if adopted, encouraged, and relished, are ours, and we are held responsible for them. If we give them a lodging, if we allow them to find a home within us, they are ours. God notices our thoughts, reproves us for our thoughts, and judges us by our thoughts; as it is written, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Vain thoughts shew a vain state of mind, and lead to vanity and confusion; therefore the Lord puts the question, "How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?"

We have all at times vain thoughts, and they are injurious to us, and dishonourable to God. Let us glance at a few of them. It is vain to think of being saved, but by the Lord Jesus Christ alone; or of being saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, except by simple faith in him. Groans, tears, cries, and human efforts, are all vain; faith, and faith in Christ alone,

saves us. It is vain to look for peace, or expect solid satisfaction of soul, but as we look away from everything within us, and without us, and look to Christ alone; the eye must be taken off duties, feelings, and everything else, and be steadily fixed on Christ alone, or there can be no solid peace. It is vain to think of enjoying the Lord's comforting presence, if we walk contrary to him, or are found out of his way; it is when we yield ourselves to God, and keep his commandments, that he meets us, and fills us with joy. It is vain to expect to enjoy spiritual comfort, while we wilfully neglect any known positive duty; but in keeping his commandments, there is a great reward. It is vain to think we are so fortified against sin, or Satan, that there is no need for fear, watchfulness, or daily crying to the strong for strength; for so soon as we do so, sin will overcome us, and Satan will find an occasion against us. It is vain to think, that while we indulge in any, the least sin, that grace will prosper in the soul; the black frost does not more surely cut up the tender plant, than indulged sin causes our grace to wither and decline. It is vain for a believer to think of sinning, without being detected and made to suffer for it; God *may* hide their sin, from their fellow Christians, but he will soundly chastise them for it. It is vain to think of receiving any blessing in ordinances without prayer, and having the eyes up to the Lord; in his sovereignty, the

Lord may send us a blessing, but we have no right to expect one. It is vain to think that the Lord needs to be moved and turned towards us by our tears and wrestlings, for though he approves of deep feeling and earnestness in prayer, and therefore honours it; his heart is towards us, and glows with infinite love to us, before we begin to pray; yea, our very tears and pleadings, prove his love, being produced by his own Spirit within us. It is vain to think of passing through the world, or arriving in heaven, without conflicts, trials, and tribulations; for it is God's decree and the Saviour's testimony, that we must pass through them. It is vain to think that the performance of one duty, will justify or excuse us in neglecting another; each duty has its place, importance, and design, and each claims our attention and regard. It is vain to think that the world, or light, frothy professors, will love and esteem us, or enjoy our company, if we are really spiritually-minded, and walk closely with God. It is vain to think that the old man will die, or the conflict between the flesh and the spirit cease, until we are called up to stand before our Saviour's face, and enjoy his glorious presence and perfect love. There will be a warfare within, and trials without, requiring the exercise of faith, courage, and self-denial, until the last—until we are absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

Have we any of these, or similar vain

thoughts, lodging within us? Do we give them house-room, or rather heart-room? If so, God asks us, "How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?" Beloved, let us pay some attention to our thoughts, and determine in the Lord's strength, not to indulge, nor even tolerate any vain thoughts. Let us make use of all proper means to correct our thoughts, and bring them into conformity to God's thoughts. Especially let us carefully read, and diligently study, God's most holy word. Let us frequently meditate on God's promises, our relation to him, and the duties springing out of the same. Let us closely examine ourselves, as in God's presence, and by the light of his inspired word. Let us be much in prayer for divine teaching, direction, and sanctification. Let us compare ourselves with the examples set before us in the Bible, and our attainments with theirs. Let us often sit in judgment upon ourselves, our motives, aims and ends, and make conformity to God's will and word, the great object of our lives.

Remember, God requires vain thoughts to be attended to. He will not overlook or treat them lightly, if we do. If therefore we do not attend to them, and seek to be purged from them, he will, and the process may be very painful. He requires us to be like-minded with David, who said, "I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love." He requires us to shew our hatred, by our conduct towards them. As therefore God hates vain

thoughts, if we neglect, or tolerate, or encourage them, he will correct us for so doing. Let us then seek deep and thorough sanctification; and pray, that our hearts may be wholly given up to God, be filled with the thoughts of God, and be ruled and controlled only by the Spirit of God.

Holy Lamb who thee receive,
Who in thee begin to live,
Day and night they cry to thee,
As thou art, so let us be!

Jesu, see my panting breast;
See I pant in thee to rest!
Gladly would I now be clean;
Cleanse me now from every sin.

Fix, O fix my wavering mind!
To the cross my spirit bind:
Earthly passions far remove:
Swallow up my soul in love.

Dust and ashes though we be,
Full of sin and misery,
Thine we are, thou Son of God:
Take the purchase of thy blood!

Boundless wisdom, power divine,
Love unspeakable are thine!
Praise by all to thee be given,
Sons of earth, and hosts of heaven.

THE LORD WILL DO ME GOOD.

"Now know I that the Lord will do me good."—Judges xvii. 13.

MANY persons have an unfounded confidence, and come to unwarrantable conclusions. In this chapter, we have an account of a young man that robbed his mother; and that mother seems to have been a widow. Some persons think it no sin to rob their parents, but it is a very heinous sin. For if it is a sin to rob any one, it is a very aggravated sin to rob the nearest and dearest relative we have. The mother cursed the robber, not knowing that she was cursing her own child. The son was ashamed and restored the money, and then his mother told him that it was intended for him. How few know how to use money rightly. The son stole it, but could not enjoy it, and now the mother has recovered it, she has a graven image made with part of it. This was an open violation of the law. Part of the house was now turned into a temple, and the family were proud of their worship. One thing was wanting, a lawful priest. A

vagrant Levite in those days of disorder comes that way. He is hired for the household. Micah is delighted, and exclaims, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing that I have a Levite to my priest." But he was woefully mistaken, as the sequel shows. Let us try and improve the subject. There are some, who are justified in saying, under certain circumstances, "*Now know I, that the Lord will do me good.*"

Observe, the Lord does his people good. He does so in many ways, and by many means, and has said, "I will rejoice over thee to do thee good." He does them good, by giving them his Spirit, as it is written, "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." Neh. ix. 20. To be taught of the Spirit, is essential to salvation. Being taught of the Spirit, proves our title to all covenant blessings. He does them good by afflicting their persons, as David acknowledges, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Psa. cxix. 71. We like ease, and health, and plenty of it; but in order to do us good, God sends us pain, and sickness, and poverty. He does us good by sanctifying our natures, hence we read, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. i. 6. This good work is commenced in regeneration, and perfected in glorification. It is

our meetness for heaven, our fitness to appear before God, and our qualification for the service of God above. May the Lord fulfil in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Then he leads us, as he did Mary, to choose the good part, which shall never be taken away. Luke x. 42. This brings us to the feet of Jesus, calms our perturbed spirits, and leads us to hold sweet, heart-affecting, soul-transforming communion with him. He also orders our goings in his ways, as saith the Psalmist, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way." Psa. xxxvii. 23. We are not left to wander at random, be driven about by circumstances, or be led by chance. But the Lord by his holy word, by his indwelling Spirit, and by his special providence, leads us right. So also he establishes us in grace, "for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." Heb. xiii. 9. That is in the glorious doctrines of grace, that we be not led to place any confidence in ceremonies, or services, or any thing that the creature can do; but rest entirely on the grace of God, as displayed in the glorious person, and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then finally, he does us good, by giving us the kindgom, as

our Lord assures us, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke xii. 32. O how God's heart must have been set upon doing us good, to have provided a kingdom for us from the foundation of the world, and then to have undertaken to lead us forth by the right way, that we may go in and possess it. The Lord then in order to do his people good, gives them his good Spirit, uses the rod of correction, changes their hearts, leads them to choose the good part, orders their footsteps, establishes them in grace, and gives them the everlasting kingdom. Reader, can you say, "*Now know I, that the Lord will do me good?*"

Let us notice the persuasion expressed. "I know that the Lord will do *me* good." How is this to be known? By several things. But to my own mind, the following is satisfactory. I know that the Lord will do me good, for *I feel my need* of the good things he gives, and the good work he performs. This sense of need, springs from the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart; and the Spirit never convinces us of our need, but in order to lead us to Jesus for a supply. If the Spirit teaches us our need of any good thing, it is because God has that good thing for us, and intends to bestow it upon us. I know that the Lord will do me good, for *I am willing to receive God's good things in his own way.* God saves gratuitously. He gives freely. He works sovereignly. In every

thing he will be God, and act like a God. Now no one is willing to be saved in God's way, or to be blessed on God's terms, until he has made them so. Therefore it is written, "Thy people shall be willing, in the day of thy power." If therefore I am willing to be saved by grace, that is the evidence that God is willing to save me: and, if I am willing to surrender myself to God, that he may work in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure, that is the proof that God will do me good. I know that the Lord will do me good; for *I heartily desire it*. Now a desire for spiritual things, proves there is some spirituality in the mind, for the carnal mind, never heartily desires spiritual blessings; and if there is any spirituality within us, it has been imparted, or produced by the Holy Spirit. If therefore the Holy Spirit has generated a desire in my heart for spiritual blessings, all such desires will be satisfied, the Lord will do me good. I know that the Lord will do me good, for *I earnestly pray for it*. All real prayer comes from God, ascends to God, is approved of God, and will be answered by God. His nature prompts him to answer prayer, and his promises bind him. Desire is the soul of prayer, and prayer is the giving vent, or expression, to desire. If I ever earnestly pray for a spiritual blessing, from a sense of my need of it, it is because I am inclined and induced to do so, by the Holy Spirit; and if the Holy Spirit in-

clines and induces me to pray for spiritual things, God will answer me; and in doing so, will do me good. I know that God will do me good, for *I am willing to wait God's time for the blessing.* Unbelief is always in a hurry, and the Lord's people, find it hard sometimes, patiently to wait for God. If therefore, feeling my utter unworthiness to receive any good thing from the Lord, and yet heartily desiring it, and earnestly praying for it, I am willing to give God time to bestow it, or work it in me, it is clear that I am taught of God; and if taught of God, he will do me good. I know that the Lord will do me good, for *I have already received some foretastes of it.* God, if he begins a work, never forsakes it, but always completes it. If therefore I have received the Holy Spirit, convincing me of sin, emptying me of self, and leading me to Jesus; or, if I know any thing of sanctified affliction; I have received some good thing from the Lord, I have had a foretaste, and I may confidently say, the Lord will do me good: or I know that the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Once more, I know that the Lord will do me good, for *I wish him to be glorified in doing it.* Man by nature never troubles himself about God's glory. He is a poor selfish being. But grace takes the eye off self, and directs it to the Lord; so that instead of making self our end in all we do, or even the welfare of our fellow creatures, we desire

above all things that God should be glorified; and when we seek God's glory, he always secures our best interests. Our seeking to glorify him, is an evidence that he will glorify us; if therefore I do not merely desire that God would do me good, but so do me good, as to glorify himself in doing it, I may fearlessly say, the Lord will do me good. If then, I feel my need of good things—if I am willing to receive them in God's way—if I heartily desire them—if I earnestly pray for them—if I am willing to wait God's time until I receive them—if I have received a foretaste of them—and if I wish God to glorify himself in bestowing them, I may with all confidence say, "Now *know I that the Lord will do me good.*"

Reader, what say you to these things? Have you been able to follow me in my previous remarks? Is it your heart's desire and prayer to God, that you may see the good of his chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of his nation? Do you desire his good Spirit to instruct you, and to experience his good work within you? Are you looking to God to guide you, and that his afflictive dispensations may be a real blessing to you? Have you been brought to sit down at the feet of Jesus, listening to his word, and finding rest for your soul? Are you established in the doctrines of divine grace, and is your heart established with the grace of the doctrines? If so, fear not, for it is your Father's good

pleasure, to give you the kingdom. But, if you are not seeking the Lord and his goodness, if you have not tasted that the Lord is gracious, if you are indifferent on this important subject, you are in a fearful case, in a very dangerous condition; and I entreat you to consider the matter well, and while you may obtain mercy, beseech the Lord to work in you mightily, to give you grace plentifully, that he may do you good in your latter end.

Shew me some token, Lord, for good,
Some token of thy special love;
Shew me that I am born of God,
And that my treasure is above.

My supplication, Lord, is this,
That all my sins may be subdued;
That all thy precious promises
May be to me, and for my good.

O seal my pardon to my soul,
And then proclaim my peace with thee:
Thus make my wounded conscience whole,
And that will be for good to me.

Let thy good Spirit rule my heart,
And govern all my words and ways:
Let grace abound in every part,
And teach my tongue to sing thy praise.

Thus may I see that I am thine,
And feel my heart to thee ascend;
Then shall I know that thou art mine,
My God, my Father, and my friend.

OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

A FEW years ago, in the neighbourhood of B——, a farmer and a manufacturer resided; but though they were near neighbours, they were very different men in their principles and habits. The one was a true Christian, who while he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, made the precepts of the New Testament the rule of his conduct. He knew by experience what it was to be an enemy of God, and what it was for self-love to rule the heart; but being delivered from this state by the grace of God, he pitied and prayed for those who still remained in their natural condition. One precept of the New Testament, was often upon his lips, and oftener in his heart, and he daily sought grace from God, to carry it out in his life: it was this, "Be ye kind one to another." Ephes. iv. 32.

He often had an opportunity afforded of carrying out this precept among the poor around him, but especially by his selfish neighbour. He opened his house for the worship of God, and this gave great offence, as his neighbour could not bear the Method-

ists, and all were Methodists with him, who worshipped God anywhere but in the Parish Church, or had any more religion than himself. Now it so happened that our friend had a horse, that was in the habit of breaking out from its own pasture, and wandering into the farmer's fields. Instead of complaining, or sending the horse home, he impounded it, and made his neighbour pay damages; and this he did three times, and the last time the damages were heavy. Still the Saviour's precept was considered binding, and "Be ye kind one to another" ruled his neighbour's conduct. Nor could he forget that it was written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for *in so doing* thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. xii. 19, 21.

Well, shortly after the horse was impounded the third time, one morning as the labourers came to their work, they saw a lot of sheep belonging to the selfish farmer, in the very field, into which the horse used to be turned out. Away they hasten to their master, full of life and desire for retaliation, and said, "Now, master, you have got the chance of making Farmer ——— pay, for there is a lot of his sheep in your field." The good man made no reply, but went in-doors, and wrote a note nearly as follows:—

"Dear Sir, you are not aware of it, but there are some of your sheep in my field, I will thank you to send one of your men to take them out.

I am, yours truly, &c."

Having written the note, he immediately sent it by one of his men. The farmer received it, and read it with astonishment. He could scarcely believe his own eyes. He went and looked, there were the sheep in the field, sure enough. Three times he had impounded his neighbour's horse, because it was found on his farm, and had made him pay heavy damages; and now he sends a kind note to inform him that his sheep were trespassing in his field, and requests him to send some one to fetch them home. He felt confounded —bewildered. "Well," said he, "if this is Methodism I will never say anything against Methodism again." And he never did, nor was he ever more annoyed at the religious services which were held on his neighbour's premises, as before; but a friendship sprung up between him and his neighbour, which existed ever after, and a neat Baptist chapel was erected on the ground of the conqueror, which remains to this day.

Reader, mark the power of real religious principle, how it conquers our proud revengeful nature. It stays the mind on God, prompts us to imitate the holy life of Jesus, and enables us by kindness to overcome our bitterest foes. If professors of religion did but

experience the power of religion, and if instead of yielding to the flesh they would carry out the precepts of the Gospel, we should see the infidel silenced, the persecutor paralysed, and many an opponent converted. No one that professes the religion of Christ should expect to succeed in anything, but as he carries out the commands of Christ; for he is expected to be what he professes to be, and if he calls the Saviour Master, he is required to do whatsoever he has commanded him. He is not to say, "I will do unto him as he hath done to me;" but, "I will do unto him, as I have reason to believe Jesus would do if he was in my circumstances." Every one that takes the name of Christian, is bound by the law of Christ, an epitome of which is, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them: *for this is the law.*"—Matt. vii. 12. Nor is this less so, "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them which curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."—Luke vi. 27, 28. So is this, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing."—1 Pet. iii. 9. Instead therefore of such a case as that I have narrated being uncommon, it ought to be of constant occurrence. Love is the spirit of true religion, and the practice of true religion is but love carried out into all the circumstances of life. Religion is not a creed, or a ceremony,

or a form, or a profession. Religion is having the spirit of Christ, imitating the conduct of Christ, and always and everywhere walking by the law of Christ. Religion in the world is just making the commands of Christ visible. O may we have grace to carry out the exhortation of the Apostle Paul, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephes. iv. 31, 32. As also that of Peter, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."—1 Pet. ii. 3.

Beloved, the religion that does not make us like Christ is not the religion of Christ; it is a counterfeit. For while we are justified by his obedience, and pardoned through his blood, we must be sanctified by his Spirit; and the sanctification of the Spirit *alone*, is satisfactory proof that our sins are pardoned, or our persons justified. Hence our Lord and Master said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth

evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."—Matt. 16—20. Good fruit, the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 22, 23. The very first of these fruits you see is love, which love in its nature and effects is set forth by the Apostle in the first epistle to the Corinthians, xiii. Where, therefore, there is the nature of Christ, there will be in some measure the temper of Christ; and where there is the temper of Christ, there will be forbearance, meekness, a readiness to forgive injuries, and a desire to make all around happy and holy. The man who does not admire the temper, conduct and precepts of Christ—who does not desire, pray, and strive to be like Christ—is not a Christian, whatever else he may be. For every Christian, that is every one taught and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, daily mourns and grieves on account of his want of conformity to the mind, will, and example of Jesus; and desires above everything else to be exactly like Jesus inwardly and outwardly, at home and abroad. Nor will any thing ever satisfy the true believer, but being holy as God is holy; or being filled with love as God is full of love. May the Holy Spirit deeply inscribe these two scriptures on our

minds, "BE YE KIND ONE TO ANOTHER," and "OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD," that we may carry them out and illustrate them in our every-day life.

Jesus, I hide my head in shame,
  I blush, and weep to see
That I, who boast thy sacred name,
  No more conform to thee.

Oh the sharp pangs he underwent,
  To clear my guilty score;
And shall I trifling wrongs resent?
  No! I'll resent no more.

I'll seize th' offending brother's hand,
  And call him still my friend;
All angry passions I'll disband,
  And every quarrel end.

While others—their punctilios boast,
  Lord, bend my stubborn will;
For he who condescends the most,
  Remains the victor still.

Fain would I imitate my Lord,
  Under each cross event;
Humility's its own reward,
  Pride its own punishment.

Come, blessed Spirit, heavenly Dove,
  Descend on balmy wings;
Come, tune my passions all to love,
  And strike the peaceful strings.

Jesus, my longing soul shall wait,
  And at thy feet adore,
'Till I shall gain that peaeful state,
  Where discord is no more.

THE LORD COMFORTING HIS PEOPLE.

By nature we are all in a very comfortless state, being wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Being dead in trespassses and sins, it is not perceived or felt. But when the Holy Spirit quickens the soul, enlightens the mind, and awakens the conscience, then our wretched condition is discovered, and we begin to look about for comfort. By repentance and reformation we hope to obtain peace and joy, but are disappointed; and the more we do, the more we strive, the more unhappy we become. All human help is vain. All earthly cisterns are empty. No one can effectually comfort a quickened soul, but the Lord. Not even the gospel, unless it be applied by the power of the Holy Spirit, will impart joy to the broken heart. It is God's prerogative to comfort, and in comforting, the Lord displays so much of his glory and grace, that the prophet cries out in raptures, "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." Isai. xlix. 13.

The Lord's people are often deeply afflicted. Sometimes in body, sometimes in soul, and sometimes in their circumstances. They are stripped, humbled, and laid low. Every thing seems to be against them, and they refuse to be comforted. They go mourning all the day long. They feel as if they were entangled and ensnared, and cannot deliver their own souls. But no afflictions that they may be called to pass through, can at all affect their relationship to God, they are his people still. And being his people he has provided for their comfort, and they shall ultimately be made happy. He has chosen them for his own, and has given them to his beloved Son; who has taken charge of their persons, undertaken to secure their salvation, and will make them happy in his own love. As they are given to Christ, so Christ is given *for* them, to expiate their sins, ransom their persons, and in the end glorify them with himself. Jesus is also given *to* them, to be the foundation of their happiness, the author of their peace, and the source of their comfort. The Spirit also has undertaken to sustain the office of Comforter, and manifesting the love of the Father, and applying the work of the Son, he comforts them.

In comforting the Lord's tried and afflicted people, he shows them that his anger is turned away, that he loves them with an infinite and everlasting love, and will never cease to bless them in time or eternity. He

unfolds the promises, and shows them their interest in them. He assures them that God is engaged to supply all their needs, give them victory over all their foes, and fill them full of joy with his countenance. Now they discover, that God, instead of being an angry God, is a loving Father; and that instead of being pledged to punish them, he has sworn that he will not be wrath with them, nor rebuke them. That though afflicted and sorrowful now, they will soon be removed beyond the reach of every trial, temptation, and pain. That God will dwell with them, and in them now, treating them as his sons and daughters; and that they, ere long, shall dwell with God, and in God, having his name written in their foreheads. He points them upward and forward, reminding them of the mansions prepared, the glory awaiting them, and the welcome that will be given them to the everlasting kingdom. He shows them, that they are delivered from hell, appointed to heaven, and shall never want any good thing.

As the Lord reveals their interest in these things, and works faith in their hearts to believe it, they are comforted and made happy. Their burdens become light, their afflictions are sweetened, and they sing in the ways of the Lord. But, again and again, will doubts creep in, and fears spring up, and unbelief work afresh, so that the renewings of the Holy Ghost are necessary. He that com-

forted us at first, must comfort us again, and comfort us until we drink of the river of pleasure, which is at his right hand. Believer, you are God's child, though at present comfortless. You are God's child, though afflicted. He that comforeth those that are cast down will comfort you. The clouds will soon pass away, the shadows will soon flee. Jesus will be revealed to you, as your loving Saviour, sympathizing high priest, and tender friend; and of you, and all like you, it shall be said, "*The Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted.*"

Ye saints, exult in Jesus' name,
Make Jesus' love your darling theme;
Sing on, you're in the heavenly road,
"Your life is hid with Christ in God."

'Tis hid from every carnal eye,
'Tis hid secure with God on high;
Beyond the reach of earth or hell,
'Tis hid with our Immanuel.

Satan may rage, the world annoy,
But neither can this life destroy;
That's safely lodged in Jesus' breast,
The sinner's refuge, and his rest.

The seed of grace your Lord bestows,
From him the oil of grace still flows;
Till you are raised to his abode,
Your life is hid with Christ in God.

SATAN AND JOB.

"SAFETY is of the Lord," Such is the testimony of the Scripture, and the fact is plentifully illustrated in the Christian life. It is not the circumstances by which we are surrounded, nor even the strength of our character, or the vigour of our graces that preserves us, but the Lord. Satan is powerful, vigilant, and malicious; he is always watching us, and seeking an opportunity, and permission to do us an injury. He has cast down many strong men wounded, and he will soon cause us to fall, if permitted. What a striking confirmation of this truth, we have in the case of Job. He was prosperous, healthy, and happy. His graces were strong. His character was complete. He was an incomparable man. Hence the testimony of God himself is, that he was a perfect, and an upright man, one who feared God, and eschewed evil. There was none like him in the earth. And yet against him did Satan plot, and against him did he throw out the insinuation, "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath

on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land, but put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." Job. i. 9, 10, 11.

What an enemy is Satan to our comfort, peace, and prosperity! He observes us, and seeks an opportunity to injure us. But God has made an hedge about all his people, through which Satan cannot pass without leave. That hedge is a special providence. God himself in the operations of nature and grace, has a special reference to his people. As the objects of his ancient choice, he pre-appointed all things, so as ultimately to secure their best interests. As the children of his infinite love, he sends his angel to guard them, and in all his operations he keeps his eye upon them. His eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. This is the hedge, and no wall of fire could secure the traveller from the wild beasts, as this secures them. If they prosper, it is because he smiles, if they are stripped it is because he grants permission.

In Job's case, Satan comes as the accuser of the brethren, and insinuates that he was a self-seeking professor, serving God from selfish motives. That his religion would only live in prosperity, but would soon die in adversity. That he was no better than an

hypocrite, and flourished because he was not tried. Only strip him, said he, turn thine hand against him, and he will curse thee to thy face. And he did curse almost every thing but God, and he spake unadvisedly of him. Satan knows human nature well. He hates the Lord's people with a bitter hatred, and would use any means to do them an injury. What a daring deceiver he must be, to try to impose upon the Omniscient God! What an implacable enemy to a consistent saint, whose conduct honours the Lord! How assiduous he is to gain permission to worry our souls, and bring us into trouble! He watches our conduct, examines our motives, puts a bad construction on all that we do, and seizes every opportunity to do us a mischief. Well may the Apostle say, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour."

His design was to rob Job of his comforts, stripping him of his property, depriving him of his health, and disturbing his peace of mind; and all this, with a view of betraying him into sin. He knew that Job's sin, if he should fall, would dishonour God, disgrace religion, grieve the godly, and put a stumbling block in the way of sinners. Not only so, but it would bring down the rod of God on his shoulders, and fill him with deep distress. He wanted also, to quench the life and power of religion in his soul; by damping his graces,

stirring up his corruptions, injecting his fiery darts, and then employing his friends to tempt and provoke him. His aim was, through Job, to dishonour the Lord himself. This object he keeps in view still, for though he could not succeed as he desired in Job's case, he has succeeded in hundreds of cases since. Let us therefore as Peter exhorts, "Resist the devil," assured that he will flee from us. And let us take encouragement from the case of Job and others, to believe, that we shall overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of our testimony.

Let us admire greatly, the condescension of the Most High, in dealing with his creatures. How wonderful that he should deign to listen, for a moment, to a foul spirit like Satan! Can we then suppose that he will listen to Satan against us, and not listen to us against him? Will God hear Satan, and refuse to hear his child? Impossible! Let us also admire his wisdom and love, as they appear in allowing Satan to try his utmost, and do his worst, and yet so supporting and working in his people, as to bring them safely through; not only so, but making them conquerers over Satan and all his allies. Let us bear in mind too, that what Satan suggested against Job, was from a knowledge of human nature. Job would no doubt have cursed God, but for the restraining and sanctifying grace of God. Nor must we forget, that Satan is still the same implacable enemy

of the Lord's people. He is a real person. He has wonderful powers of intellect. He has a deep and profound acquaintance with our nature, and knows how most successfully to attack it. He would soon and certainly overcome us, if we had not a wiser, and a stronger than he, on our side. What encouragement we may derive from this, that though he was allowed to try Job, and try him to the uttermost, yet he was not allowed to overcome him, so as to gain his ends upon him; so, though he may be allowed to try us, and the conflict may be desperate, long continued, and the issue seem for a considerable time to hang in the balance, yet the same grace and goodness that enabled Job to overcome, will secure to us the victory. We may be overcome for a time, but we shall overcome at the last. Yea, we shall be more than conquerors through him that hath loved us. Thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Believers shall appear one day,
  Before the Saviour's throne;
The storms they meet with by the way,
  But make his power known.

Their passage lies across the brink
  Of many a threatening wave:
The world expects to see them sink,
  But Jesus lives to save.

GRATITUDE.

NOTHING is more graceful or becoming in us, as believers in Jesus Christ, than gratitude. Oh, how much we have to be grateful for! Whether we look back at the past, or forward to the future, what cause for praise. The Lord has dealt well with us, according to his word. If we look within, there is God's work, preparing us for glory; or if we look up to heaven, there is God's Son, preparing glory for us. Behind us is the disgrace, the dunghill, and the horrible pit, from which we have escaped; and before us is the honour, the mansion, and the happy home, which we shall soon possess. My heart is moved, my soul heaves with delightful emotions, and no words can express my feelings better than those of David, "Now therefore, O God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."—1 Chron. xxix. 13.

David was grateful for *peace*. He had been a man of war. He had shed much blood. He had been familiar with the sword from his youth. He had fought with strangers, he knew what it was for his own people to rise up against him. But now, in his old age,

all was peace. His sun appeared to be going down in a cloudless sky. He was near home, and had a glorious home to go to. Such is my privilege at present, I have peace. Peace with God through faith in his Son. Peace in the church, through forbearance and love. Peace within, and peace without. How sweet is peace. Well may the Apostle exhort us, "Follow peace with all men." And yet some men, some professors, do not appear to love peace. How can they be the sons of the God of peace, who has said, "If it be possible, live peaceably with all men!" David was grateful for *liberality*. He had largely prepared for the building of the Temple, he had given much, and had given heartily, and it made him happy. His princes and his people were liberal too, and his heart overflowed with joy. To see such love to God's house, and such zeal in God's cause, kindled a flame in his heart, which led him to exclaim, "Now therefore, O God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name."

Nor only so, but he had bright and soul-elevating views of God, which filled him with an intense desire to praise and glorify him. "Thine, O Lord, is the *greatness*." The greatness of God is a source of joy and rejoicing to the believer, because a God in all his greatness is his. Besides which, if God is great, then his mercy is great, his power is great, his grace is great, and his love is great; and the great mercy, power, grace, and love of

the great God, is enough to make the greatest sinner happy and holy. Thine, O Lord, are the *riches*, "for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth is thine." God is the great proprietor. He may lease out his property to his creatures, but he still holds the right to claim, and dispose of it as he pleases. All his vast wealth is made over to his people in his Son, and they are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. When they are of age they will come into possession, and then "the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." And until then, he will supply all their needs, meet all their wants, and act toward them as a Father and a Friend. In addition to this, he is *Supreme*. "Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all." He is the ever present, ever active ruler, in the world, and in the church. He is above every enemy, and will over-rule all that occurs for the good of his people and the glory of his great name. O what cause for gratitude and praise, to have Jehovah for our God, and to know that his greatness and his grace, his riches and his sympathy, his supremacy and his power, all combine to secure our best interests, and to satisfy our longing souls!

The gratitude of David was *deep*. It welled up from the depths of his soul. It dwelt deep in his heart, when it did not rise to the surface and overflow. It was *sincere*. There

was no pretence. Nothing was put on for the occasion. He deeply felt God's goodness, and therefore he gave utterance to glowing words. It was *becoming*. It becomes the just to be thankful. Praise is comely for the upright. Beloved, if any have cause for deep and sincere gratitude we have! David praised God for ability to help his cause, for an opportunity to do so, and for a willing heart to contribute of his substance largely and cheerfully. Many are furnished with the means of doing good, but they have not the heart; others have the heart, but they have not the means, but here was both. O what a privilege to be allowed to help in God's cause, to be willing to deny ourselves to give to his poor, to have the means, the opportunity, and the disposition, thus to serve God!

"We praise thy glorious name." From the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised. To praise his name, is to celebrate his *grace*. That grace which he has so variously, and so richly displayed in our experience. To praise his name, is to publish his *condescension*. His wonderful condescension in choosing such poor worms, in adopting such miserable creatures, in using such wretched instruments, and thus honouring such utterly unworthy beings. To praise his name, is to speak of his *work*, the wisdom displayed, the skill manifested, and the perfection stamped upon it. His work within us. His work for

us. His work by us. Let us then praise his glorious name, his glorious grace, his glorious condescension, and his glorious work.

Let us be *thankful*, and to increase our thankfulness, let us think of our faults, our follies, and our transgressions. Notwithstanding these, God has wrought for us, in us, and by us, and the best we can do is gratefully to exclaim, "Now therefore, O God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." Let us be *hopeful*, for the Lord who has done so much for us, will do more. He who has begun, will complete the work. Yes, we are warranted to say, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever." Let us be *prayerful*, and having received so much, let us ask for more; especially for more grace, and a fuller supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. O God, there is nothing that thy church needs, so much as thy Spirit! Wilt thou not pour down the Spirit upon us from on high, and so fill us with the Holy Ghost and with power, to the praise of thy glorious grace! O Holy Spirit, come in the fulness of thy power, with all thy gifts, and grace into thy Church, and fire it with holy zeal, fill it with profound gratitude, and make it a universal blessing!

A LOSS DEPRECATED.

EVERY believer possesses the Holy Spirit, *must* possess the Spirit; for he is the author of faith, and there is no believing unto salvation without him. He is the worker of all inward religion, working in the Lord's people, to will and to do of his good pleasure. But he so works in us, after regeneration, as to influence, dispose, and prompt us; helping our infirmities, but not in the least interfering with our accountability or responsibility. Though he works in us, yet we act freely; as freely as if no power were exerted, or influence employed. Therefore we read of his being resisted, grieved, and vexed; and have the exhortation given us, "Quench not the Spirit," as if the Spirit's influence were a gentle flame within us, which may be extinguished by us. And that his presence and comforting influence may be forfeited and sinned away is clear, which caused David with intense feeling to cry out, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Ps. li. 11.

The Spirit entirely leaves some, on whom he has acted, as he did those with whom he strove before the flood; as God said, "My

Spirit shall not always strive with men." And as he did Saul the King of Israel, as we read, "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." And as he did the people of the Jews, which caused him to say, "Woe also to them when I depart from them." How careful then should persons be, not to stifle convictions, harden their hearts, and resist the Holy Ghost. Every one should encourage the first motions of the Spirit, yielding to him, and asking for more and more of his influence and operation. Without the Holy Spirit working within us, and forming Christ in the heart, we cannot be saved; for the work of the Spirit within us, is as necessary to salvation, as the work of Christ without us.

When the Spirit of God once takes up his residence as the Spirit of life, of love, and adoption, he never finally withdraws, or abandons the soul to ruin. But though he does not totally and finally withdraw, he witholds his influence, and leaves us pretty much to ourselves. He ceases to comfort us, or to strengthen us with might, according to his power in the inner man. He refuses to assist us in prayer, and we are left to toil alone. Then like Samson, we become weak, and are like other men; or like the church we cry out, "The Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." When the Spirit is withdrawn from us, all our graces wither,

our evidences become obscured, our joy dies out, and our duties become a task. Then we become light and frivolous, or gloomy and morose; our hearts are hardened, our understanding is darkened, and all within us appears carnal or cold. The greatest loss we can sustain is the presence and operation of the holy Comforter in the heart. Then very often doubts, fears, and misgivings spring up, unbelief works, and a sense of condemnation is felt in the conscience. We turn every thing against ourselves, refuse to be comforted, and begin to neglect duties, because we have no enjoyment in them. Past experience looks like delusion, the hard heart refuses to weep, and the mouth is often ready to speak against God. Sad, very sad, has been the experience of many professors, when the Spirit has left them for a time; well therefore may David pray, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

This is never done but for sin. It is a punishment, or rather a paternal correction. When we forsake the Lord, slight his word and ordinances, and improperly mix up with the world, we provoke the Lord to anger. When we ungratefully slight and disregard his sweet intimations, and resist his kind and gentle promptings to duty, we grieve his loving heart. When we sin against the light, oppose the suggestions of a tender conscience, and openly act contrary to his divine word, we vex and rouse up his displeasure. When

we allow ourselves to live in the neglect of known duty, in the practice of any acknowledged sin, or persevere in any course in opposition to the testimony of our conscience, we resist the Holy Ghost, and must expect to suffer. All such conduct dishonours God, belies our profession, wounds the Saviour, and causes the Holy Spirit to withdraw. But the Spirit, seldom if ever, withdraws at once, he checks us, smites us, and in various ways expostulates with us; and only when he is wearied with forbearing does he say, "I will go and return to my place until they acknowledge their iniquity, in their affliction they will seek me early.

Reader, have you received the Holy Ghost? Have you enjoyed the sweet comforts of his love, his soul-ravishing joy, and his precious revelations of the Saviour? Has your heart been softened, humbled, and purified by his gracious operations? Has your conscience been enlightened, made honest, and tender, by his revealing the truth and applying the blood of the Saviour? Has he liberated the will, elevated the affections, and filled the understanding with pleasant and saving light, in your experience? Do you enjoy his help in prayer, his teaching in reading the Scriptures, and his presence in the ordinances of God's house? If so, happy are you, and it becomes you to walk softly, carefully, and closely with God. The dove is one of the most timid of birds, and is soon startled; and

this is the bird selected to represent the Holy Spirit. Why should you vex and grieve his love? Rather seek his more powerful operations, that possessing him as an earnest, being sealed by him unto the day of redemption, and enjoying his witness to your adoption, you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Beloved, let us watch and be sober, for it is more easy to sin away, and lose the gracious operations of the Spirit, than to recover and regain them. Let us be much in prayer, that we may receive the spirit in greater measure, enjoy his work in greater power, and be by him more thoroughly conformed to the likeness of our beloved Lord. Let us cultivate filial fear and tenderness of spirit, lest we become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Who can tell either the power or deceitfulness of sin! To what lengths it led David, into what depths of sorrow it brought him, and how many good things it kept back from him. If David fell, we may. If he grieved away the Spirit, we may. He had to groan over broken bones, blighted hopes, and blasted prospects, and all the effect of his own sin, so may we. Let us therefore fear, lest we peril our peace, confidence, and comfort; and let us cultivate a sense of our dependence on the Spirit, and learn to live in the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and to sow to the Spirit, that we may of the Spirit

reap life everlasting. Blessed Comforter, dwell in our hearts, rule our spirits, and regulate our lives, that we may ever, and in all things, glorify free and sovereign grace!

Stay, thou insulted Spirit, stay,
  Tho' I have done thee such despite;
Nor cast the sinner quite away,
  Nor take thine everlasting flight.

Tho' I have steel'd my stubborn heart,
  And still shook off my guilty fears;
And vex'd, and urg'd thee to depart,
  For forty long rebellious years:

Tho' I have most unfaithful been,
  Of all whoe'er thy grace receiv'd;
Ten thousand times thy goodness seen;
  Ten thousand times thy goodness griev'd:

Yet O! the chief of sinners spare,
  In honour of my great High Priest;
Nor in thy righteous anger swear
  To' exclude me from thy people's rest.

This only woe I deprecate,
  This only plague I pray remove,
Nor leave me in my lost estate,
  Nor curse me with this want of love.

From now, my weary soul release,
  Upraise me with thy gracious hand,
And guide me into thy perfect peace,
  And bring me to the promis'd land.

THE MARVELLOUS EXCHANGE.

2 Cor. v. 21.

The Apostle is treating of the gospel ministry, and showing that God is most desirous that men should be upon good terms with him. Therefore he does not appear in dazzling splendour, and glorious majesty, as when he gave the law; but comes down to us in human form, in the person of his Son, in order to remove every impediment out of the way of our reconciliation to him. And having laid a foundation for friendship on honourable terms, he sends forth his ambassadors to invite, yea, to beseech men, to be reconciled unto him; promising not to impute their trespasses unto them, but to treat them as kindly, as lovingly, as if they were innocent, and had never offended him at all. The ground on which he does this, is thus stated, speaking of Christ, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The Lord Jesus was pure, without sin. His divine nature could not be tainted, or be in any way impure; as divine, he is the holy

God. His human nature was prepared for him, in the womb of the virgin, by the presence, power, and influences of the Holy Spirit. As the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; also, that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Thus, God created a new thing in the earth, a woman compassed a man, a clean thing was brought out of an unclean. A child was born, who was not implicated in the guilt of Adam's sin, and whose nature was not tainted with human corruption. "In him was no sin." The God man, was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. His natures were spotless, and his whole life was correct. He could appeal to the Jews, and ask, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Pilate was compelled to testify, "I find in him no fault at all, no, nor yet Herod." In every thought, word, and deed, he acted in exact accordance with God's pure, spiritual, and holy law. His death was unmerited, he did not deserve to die. He had broken no law. He had injured no one. And if he had not voluntarily offered to die the just for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty, he could not have been put to death. His resurrection from the dead, by the power of the Father, was a glorious proof, that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "*He knew no sin.*" The act of sin, never exposed him to

punishment. The guilt of sin, never troubled his conscience. The thought of sin, never polluted his breast.

> "His life was pure without a spot,
> And all his nature clean."

But he was made sin for us. He was not made a sinner, or he could not have been an acceptable sacrifice for sin. Sin was not transfused into him, though it was laid upon him. He was made an offering for sin, or a sin offering, and therefore he was treated as a sinner. The sins of all he represented, of all for whom he became a substitute, were placed to his account. He became answerable for them. He voluntarily undertook to become responsible for them. The whole debt became his. Our breaches of the law were to be answered for by him. Therefore as sin was imputed to him, or placed to his account, it was punished in his person. All that it was necessary to inflict, in order to satisfy justice, and present an example of God's hatred to sin, to the universe, was inflicted on him. The whole curse of the law, the whole desert of sin, the whole of the wrath of God for sin, was put into one cup, and presented to him. He looked into it and trembled, crying out, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" He took it, and fell to the ground, blood oozing from every pore of his body, he cried in bitter agony, "If it be possible, let this cup pass

from me!" He drank of it, and exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But it pleased the Lord to bruise him, Jehovah put him to grief, when he made his soul an offering for sin. O the tremendous agony which he endured! O the depths of woe through which he waded! O the waves and billows of divine wrath, that went over him!

"Our sins deserved a hell,
And Christ that hell endured,
Guilt broke his guiltless heart,
With wrath that we incurred:
We bruised his body, spilt his blood,
And both became our heavenly food."

Sin, all the sin placed to his account, was put away by his death. He carried sin to the cross, but not to Joseph's tomb. "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." "He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "By one offering he perfected for ever, them that are sanctified." He made a full atonement, he gave perfect satisfaction, and by him all who believe are justified from all things. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Every believer may now triumphantly ask, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Blessed, for ever

blessed be God, for placing our sins, to the account of Jesus—for punishing our sins in the person of Jesus—for putting away, and putting away for ever, our sins by the death of Jesus!

He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. What a wondrous exchange, Christ takes our sins, that we might take his righteousness! He suffers, that we might go free. He is stripped, that we may be clothed. He is put to death, that we might live. He is made sin, that we might be made righteous. O what mercy! What a mystery of mercy is this! We have no righteousness of our own, our best is but as filthy rags. God requires a righteousness, and one that will meet all the demands of his law, and satisfy his impartial justice, in order to our justification. Jesus, therefore, came to *do*, and to *suffer*, all that was necessary to make us *righteous*, divinely righteous. *The righteousness of God*, or righteous as he is righteous. The righteous- of God *in him*. We now, therefore become righteous, perfectly righteous, not by obeying the law, but by faith in Christ—union to Christ—and participation with Christ. Faith brings us to Christ, the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ, and then we participate in all Christ has. His life is our righteousness, his death is our atonement, his intercession is our salvation. He took our place, that we might take his. He came to toil for us, that

we may rest with him. He sorrowed for us, that we may rejoice with him. He died for us, that we may live with him. Blessed Redeemer, how wondrous thy love! How perfect thy work!

Let us then, *admire God's wisdom, in the contrivance of such a plan.* The thought never could have entered into any created mind—the scheme never could have been devised, either by human or angelic intellect. It is of God. Of God alone. In it, God hath abounded toward us, in all wisdom and prudence. Let us *receive God's testimony without gainsaying.* We may not be able fully to comprehend it, but we can believe it. The philosophy of this plan may puzzle us, but the fact will fill us with joy unspeakable. Let us *plead Christ's work alone for acceptance with God.* It is not what we have done, but what Jesus has done. It is not what we deserve, but what Jesus suffered. Jesus takes my place, becomes answerable for my sins, undertakes to endure the sufferings I deserved; and makes over to me all the merit of his righteous life, and atoning death. In Jesus, God can accept me. For the sake of Jesus, God will pardon, and justify me. Through Jesus, God will put me among his children, and place me before his face for ever. Let us *expect God to honour his own arrangement.* This is the way to conquer doubt, overcome fear, and make Satan flee. God arranged that the obedience of his Son

should be placed against our disobedience; that the holiness of his Son, should be placed against our unholiness; and that the merit of his Son, should be placed against our demerit; and in this way he "can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." In this way he can be a just God, and yet a Saviour. Let us, therefore, *look for justifying righteousness in Jesus.* He has finished the transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. He is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." He is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth; and our righteousness is of him, saith the Lord. It is in this way, that a just God, justifieth the ungodly, by faith. Let us *glorify free grace for the wondrous transfer.* It is of grace, and grace alone, that our sins were transferred to Jesus; and that his righteousness is transferred to us. Therefore, by grace are we saved, through faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Finally, let us *view Jehovah as the alone author of this glorious plan.* It is of God, and therefore godlike. It is of God, and therefore fully,—exactly, meets the case. It is of God, and therefore it is perfect. All sin is put away, scattered as a cloud, hidden as in the depths of the sea, lost, so that when it is sought for it shall not be found, for there shall be none. Well might the Apostle say, as introductory to this subject, "All things are of God, who hath re-

conciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." And again, "All things are for your sakes, that THE ABUNDANT GRACE, might through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God."

From whence this fear, and unbelief?
Hath not the Father put to grief,
  His spotless Son for me?
And will the righteous Judge of men,
Condemn me for that debt of sin,
  Which, Lord! was charged on thee?

Complete atonement thou hast made,
And to the utmost farthing paid,
  Whate'er thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
If sheltered in thy righteousness,
  And sprinkled with thy blood?

If thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely, in my room, endured
  The whole of wrath divine;
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First, at my bleeding surety's hand,
  And then again at mine?

Turn, then, my soul, unto thy rest!
The merits of thy great High Priest,
  Have bought thy liberty;
Trust in his efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
  Since Jesus died for thee.

"WHO IS THE LORD."

EXOD. V. 2.

THIS was Pharaoh's insolent question, when the Lord sent Moses and Aaron to him, to ask him to allow Israel to go and hold a feast unto him. God treated him with respect, and appealed to him as a rational, intelligent, and accountable being. This is just how God treats sinners now. He sends them mild and loving messages. He speaks to them as a man would speak to his friend. His words indicate a loving heart, and intimates that he is loath to inflict punishment. Pharaoh was rude, insolent, and proud, and uses the most insulting terms in his reply. Just so do sinners, or at least if they do not so speak, they so act. Their conduct is a decided, deliberate insult to God, and it is wonderful that he bears with them as he does. But he is slow to anger, and of great kindness—his long-suffering is surprising, and his mercy is great unto the heavens. But to the point. The Lord sends a message to sinners, a message full of love—a message breathing mercy—a message on the reception or rejection of which, man's salvation depends. Instead of receiving the message and acting upon

it at once, the sinner arrogantly asks, "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?*" Let us look at the question a little.

"WHO IS THE LORD?" In his nature he is the self-existent, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God. The only independent and naturally immortal being. The author of our existence, the preserver of our life, whose glory is the great end of our being. He supports all creation, rules all worlds, and will judge every man according to his works. He has stamped his name upon creation, but has fully revealed himself in the gospel of his grace. He is the God of mercy, who displays mercy, delights in mercy, and waits to show mercy to the vilest of our race. He gave his Son to make an atonement for sin, on the ground of which atonement he can pardon any sinner, in perfect accordance with his justice, and be honoured in doing so. He therefore sends word to us that he is ready to forgive, desirous of being reconciled, and that if we confess our sins, and accept of mercy on the ground of the atonement of his Son, there is our pardon. Every sin shall be forgiven. Every fault shall be forgotten. Every offence shall be buried. He will place to our account the perfect work of his Son, and we shall be made the righteousness of God in him. He is willing to forgive and forget all the past, if we will but be reconciled, be at peace with him, and obey him for the future. He pro-

poses no hard conditions, it is only, "Believe in Jesus, and be saved. Confess sin, and be forgiven. Submit to, or accept the righteousness of God, and be justified." But how do the majority of sinners treat such love? How do they act when they receive such a message? Very much like Pharaoh, they ask, "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him.*"

"WHO IS THE LORD?" The God of justice. Who has *a right* to punish sinners. Who is *bound* to punish you, if you live and die opposed to his will, and rejecting his mercy. Bound by every principle of moral government—bound by his righteous law—bound by the perfections of his own infinitely holy and perfect nature. He has already threatened and pronounced the doom of all impenitent sinners. Not only so, but from his natural hatred to sin, and to induce a salutary impression on sinners, he has at times punished sin even in this world. He once deluged the world with water, and destroyed every intelligent being inhabiting it, except eight persons. He destroyed the cities of the plain by the opposite element, raining fire from heaven, and consuming the whole of the inhabitants, save Lot and his two daughters. He drowned Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. He caused the earth to open and swallow up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their company. He sent his angel and in one night he slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians, who were

encamped against Jeruselam. And he has declared that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." "Upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire, brimstone, and a horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup." Yea, he will punish them "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." This, sinner, is the God you despise, whose laws you break, and whose anger you dare. This is the God whose goodness you abuse, whose mercy you slight, and whose favour you contemn. This is the God before whom you must shortly appear in judgment, and to whom you must give an account, answering for every vain thought, idle word, and sinful action. This is the God respecting whom by your conduct you have, like Pharaoh, arrogantly asked, "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?*"

Truly, it will be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of this living God. For then will be fulfilled in their uttermost meaning, the words of the prophet, words enough to make one's ears tingle, and one's heart quake. O may the Holy Spirit apply them, while we quote them! "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and hath fury; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies." But what a different strain follows. "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wick-

ed." Nahum i. 2, 3. And who are the wicked? Every obstinate sinner. Every unpardoned soul. All who are ignorant of God as revealed in his Son, and all who refuse to obey the gospel, which requires repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Here is his own words, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. Ah, the sinner will no longer proudly ask, "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?*" But, while tormented beyond description or conception, will be obliged to admit the justice of his doom, being filled with unutterable awe, by the sight of his infinite magnificence and glory. Dear reader, how will it be with you in that day? What will be your portion? How is it with you now? What is your portion now? If now you believe in Jesus—if now you take God for your portion—all will be well with you then, and well with you for ever. Then, if you have not, "Repent, and believe the gospel," "Repent, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." O may the goodness of God lead you to repentance—repentance unto life! Amen.

I WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

EXPOSTULATING with a friend in reference to a fault into which he had fallen, by way of excuse he said, "*I was taken by surprise.*" This implied that he was off his guard, that he was neglecting the loving admonition of his gracious Lord, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." Though in one sense always safe, we should never feel secure, for security generally ends in a fall. We are in an enemies' country, and our enemies are crafty, cruel, and watchful. We are in a wilderness, and may meet with surprising dangers where we least expect them. We are under the guidance and direction of a special providence, and may hope for many changes, and different treatment at different times. We should live believing God's word, watching God's hand, and waiting upon God in his ways; if we do not *we shall be taken by surprise.*

We may now be surrounded by kind, judicious, and sympathising friends. They may seem to be the light of our eyes, the stay of our hearts, and the joy of our souls. Let us enjoy them while we have them, but let us not place any dependence upon them; for if

we do, they may soon become alienated from us, be removed to a distance, or even be turned against us. Man is changeable. He walketh in a vain show. At his best state, he is altogether vanity. Trust him, and he will deceive you. Put him in God's place, and he will wound you, and pierce you to the heart. "Trust not in a friend, put no confidence in a guide." "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Let your God be your friend. Remember there is ONE friend that loveth at all times. You may trust him, confide in him, and open your whole heart to him. But if you do so without reserve to any other, you may be betrayed, deceived, or forsaken; and then in the bitterness of your soul, to account for the painful acuteness of your feelings, you may be heard to exclaim, "*I was taken by surprise.*"

Death is our enemy. He has no regard to our feelings, wants, or wishes. The finest, most fruitful, and most valuable trees he marks to fall. The husband, the father, the mother, the wife, are often taken away with a stroke. We ought to enjoy our relations, and we ought to love them; but we must remember they are only lent us, we cannot claim them; nor when sent for can we detain them. If we look upon any relation as essential to our support or comfort, or usefulness on earth, it is very likely that we shall be deprived of that relative. God often shews

his people that no one is essential to them, but himself. That they can live, be comfortable, and do good in the absence of any earthly relative. Let us not then idolise any relative, however near, dear, or important to us; for if we do, ten to one but we shall be bereaved of it, and then with deep distress of soul, we may find ourselves saying "*I was taken by surprise.*"

If the Lord has given us property or a good income, or a profitable situation, let us take heed that we do not look upon such things as our freehold, for we have no title deeds to shew for them. We may be deprived of them suddenly, and soon. Temporal wealth, is spoken of in God's word as if it were nothing. "Wilt thou set thine heart upon that which is not? Do not riches make to themselves wings and flee away as an eagle toward heaven?" Sometimes, by one stroke, providence sweeps away all our property. In one moment we lose the income, which we believed to be ours for life. By one turn our situation which we considered permanent is gone. Now if we have been depending upon our income, instead of God; or if we have been making gold our trust, and fine gold our confidence; or if we have been secure in our situation instead of trusting in the Lord alone; no wonder if the Lord tears our nest, cuts down our hopes as a tree, and gives us occasion to say with Job, "The Lord hath taken away." Then perhaps the suddenness

or the severity of the stroke will fill us with commotion, alarm, and distress. Then unbelief will work in our hearts, and sadness will shroud our spirits, and all we shall be able to say in accounting for our sorrow will be "*I was taken by surprise.*"

Man is born to trouble, nor was religion ever intended to exempt us from it. Our blessed Lord assures all his disciples, that in the world they should have tribulation. Days of trouble will be sure to be found in our lot. Now, we are not to be always anticipating trouble, or to allow the thought of future trouble to spoil or rob us of present enjoyment. But we are always to be prepared to meet trouble. By faith in God, by confidence in Jesus, by relying on the promises, and by praying always, and giving thanks for every comfort, we are to be ready to meet whatever trouble comes. Nor are we to feel sure in reference to any quarter, that trouble will not come from thence; for it very often comes from the quarter we least expected. Trouble sometimes springs up in the family, sometimes it springs up in our business, and sometimes it meets us in the Church of God. If there is any quarter from which we never anticipated any trouble, from that quarter it is very likely to come. Now if we are off our guard, if we fancy our sun will no more go down, neither will our moon withdraw itself; if we say our mountain stands strong, we shall never be moved;

then when the Lord darkens the sun in the clear day, when the moon is hidden behind the dense dark clouds, when our mountain is removed and cast into the sea; sad, sorrowful, and cast down, we shall most likely be heard to say, "*I was taken by surprise.*"

Brethren, in days like these, and in a world like this, it becomes us to be prepared for any thing, for every thing. Nothing should dispirit us, or cause us to fret. All things are under a divine arrangement and superintendence. Our God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. As he loves us with an infinite love, and consults our welfare in all he does, and in all he permits, we ought not to be dejected, occur what will. Nothing should "*take us by surprise,*" for we are forewarned, that we may be forearmed. Our God has told us of troubles, trials, temptations, losses, crosses, and bereavements, before they come to pass, that when they do come to pass, we may be ready to meet them, be ready to battle with them, and overcome them. Nothing can sever us from his love. Nothing can deprive us of his care. Nothing can pluck us out of his hand. Let us then confide in him, walk closely with him, and in every thing look to him. He is our Father, and we may pour all our sorrows into his bosom. He is our Saviour, and we may trust all our affairs in his hands. He is our Comforter, and we may look to him to comfort us in all our

tribulations. Yes, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort is our Father. The Son of God, the Almighty, ever present, and immutable Saviour, is our Saviour. The Holy Spirit, the dove-like, gentle, and patient Comforter, is our Comforter. And with such a Father, such a Saviour, and such a Comforter, what shall we fear? Of whom shall we be afraid? Fear! Afraid! Rather let us sing "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Nor let us ever be so inattentive to our Lord's loving instructions, or so neglect his gracious warnings, or so forget his holy cautions, as for any trouble, trial, loss, or cross, to cause us to exclaim, "*I was taken by surprise.*"

Alas! what hourly dangers rise!
  What snares beset my way!
To heaven O let me lift my eyes,
  And hourly watch and pray.

How oft my mournful thoughts complain,
  And melt in flowing tears!
My weak resistance, ah! how vain;
  How strong my foes and fears!

O gracious God, in whom I live,
  My feeble efforts aid;
Help me to watch, and pray, and strive,
  Though trembling and afraid.

MAN'S TREATMENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

REAL Christians have never been favourites of the world, and while it continues what it is, they never can be. "The world will love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you:" such is the testimony of the Lord Jesus. Nor can the pure and simple gospel be pleasant to the world, because it lays the sinner in the dust, and exalts God as supreme and sovereign. Let us not be surprised then, if we hear worldlings speak against the gospel, and traduce the Lord's people; for what the Romans told Paul is in a good measure true in the present day, "As concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against." Acts xxviii. 22.

This sect originated with Jesus, the hated Nazarene, who came into the world for its good, and to save his people from their sins. He gathered around him many, but they were principally the poor and unlearned. There was nothing in them, or about them, to recommend them to the proud and sensual world. They were begotten of God, born

again, and made new creatures in Christ. They embraced the truth he taught, observed the precepts that he gave, and copied the example that he set. They loved his person, were concerned for his glory, and identified themselves with his interests. Their creed consisted pretty much in the facts, that man is a lost sinner, that salvation by works is impossible, and therefore it must be of grace, or not at all. That the Lord Jesus came into the world to take the sinner's place, fulfil the law in the sinner's stead, and die as the sinner's substitute. That on account of what Jesus has done and suffered, pardon, peace, and reconciliation are preached to sinners, and whosoever believeth is promised everlasting life. That believers should profess faith in Christ, observe his ordinances, and make his will the rule of their lives. That they should love one another, serve one another, and if need be, die for each other. That believing in Jesus, doing his will, and seeking to glorify his name, they secure to themselves an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. That as Christians, they should show their conformity to Christ, by loving sinners, doing good even to their enemies, and seeking by all means their salvation. By such hopes they were animated, by such rules they walked, and at such objects they aimed, and yet they were every where spoken against.

Their persons were spoken against, because they were generally poor and unlearned; and because they poured contempt on the luxuries, pride, and honours of this world. They were treated as the offscouring of all things, unfit for society, unfit to live. Every one felt that he might reproach, revile, and speak against a Nazarene. For them, often, there was no protection, no law but to condemn them; and they suffered the loss of all things, and multitudes of them of life itself. And yet, like Israel in Egypt, the more they were persecuted, the more they multiplied and grew; until at length they spread not only over the Roman empire, but nearly over the world. And, had they retained the simplicity of their lives, the spirituality of their minds, and the correctness of their creed, they would no doubt have encircled the globe. But at length they were courted by royalty, loaded with wealth, and became intoxicated with worldly honours, and then their glory departed. They drank into the spirit of the world, conformed to its maxims and customs, sought its approbation and applause, and so fell from their exalted station, and lost their real dignity.

Their doctrines were spoken against. They insisted upon the fact, that there is but one God, that in the Divine nature there are three persons, and that each person is truly, naturally, and eternally God. That man has sinned, and God is bound to punish, in order

to manifest his justice, and maintain the honour of his law. That there is no escaping the punishment of sin, but by an atonement, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." That no atonement could be acceptable to God, except it were infinitely meritorious; and consequently that no sinner could atone for his own sins, or redeem his brother, giving unto God a ransom for him. That in order to meet the case, God sent his own Son into the world, who taking human nature into union with his divine, undertook to answer for man's conduct, atone for man's sin, and suffer all the penal consequences of man's guilt. Consequently, that there is salvation in none other, but Jesus; by nothing beside the perfect work of Jesus. Man, therefore, must be pardoned as a criminal, for another's sake; must be justified as ungodly, through another's righteousness; must be sanctified as a sinner, through another's agency; must, in a word, be saved as a pauper, wholly and altogether of grace. Such doctrines, laying as they do, man in the dust, and exalting the Lord alone, were highly offensive to the proud and haughty heart of man, and excited his animosity or contempt. It became necessary, therefore, to suffer for them, or to dilute and accommodate them to the prejudices of the carnal mind. For a time, the former course was pursued, and the preachers and professors were driven out from human society wan-

dering about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, or were cruelly put to death. But while the Nazarenes suffered, their doctrines spread and prospered; and multitudes became obedient unto the faith. But at length professors began to compromise with the world, to mix the water of human ceremonies with the wine of gospel ordinances; to mingle the doctrines of the heathen with the doctrines of Christ; and the result was, the sword of the Spirit lost its edge, and the world gave up its opposition to what was now become another gospel; and the sect that had been every where spoken against, with the exception of a few, was swallowed up in a worldly church. The crown was lost, the honour was forfeited, and punishment and rejection followed.

But there were always some, who had not defiled their garments, who would not mingle among the heathen, or conform to their ways. Some who clave to Jesus, held fast his doctrine, and sought to do him honour. These were the objects of hatred, not to the heathen only, but to the worldly church, and these have been called to suffer for the truth, more or less. There are still some, who, like the ancient sect of the Nazarenes, are every where spoken against. They will not swim with the stream. They will not compromise their Master's honour, give up their Master's truth, or change their Master's ordinances. According to the light they have,

they walk; and they rejoice to exalt the Saviour, humble the sinner, and proclaim salvation, all of grace. Spoken against they are, they will be; but while they maintain an honest conscience, enjoy the peace of God, and experience the comforts of the Holy Ghost; they can rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

Reader, do you belong to this sect? Is there any thing in your religion that is distasteful to the world, any thing that draws forth its opposition, or excites its contempt? The carnal mind is still enmity against God, and if we are godlike, and how can we be Christians without? but if we are godly, that enmity will manifest itself against us. If we believe Christ's gospel as it is to be found in his word; if we copy Christ's example, as set before us in the gospel; if we testify againt the world, that the works of it are evil, and call upon it to repent, as Christ did, we shall soon be spoken against. We shall be ranked with them who would turn the world upside down. We shall be called enthusiasts, or hypocrites, or saints, or by some name intended to express contempt. But if we be reproached for the sake of Christ, happy are we; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on our part he is glorified. If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. If, therefore, our religion is palatable to the world, if it awakens no un-

pleasant remarks, if it calls forth no opposition, if it occasions us no loss in our reputation, or property, or social standing, there is some reason to suspect whether it be genuine and apostolic. One thing is clear, account for it how we may, we do not belong to that sect that is everywhere spoken against.

Great Leader of thine Israel's host,
  We shout thy conquering name;
Legions of foes beset thee round,
  And legions fled with shame.

A victory glorious and complete
  Thou by thy death didst gain;
So in thy cause may we contend,
  And death itself sustain.

By our illustrious General fired,
  We no extremes would fear;
Prepared to struggle and to bleed,
  If thou, O Lord, be near.

We'll trace the footsteps thou hast drawn,
  To triumph and renown;
Nor shun thy combat and thy cross,
  May we but share thy crown.

SLEEPING IN JESUS.

THERE is always something solemn in death, and the circumstances connected with death, are often very painful. The sufferings of the body, the occasional loss of reason, the separation from near relatives, and dear friends, are at times very distressing. But death itself, it is not to be looked upon as an evil, any more than sleep is. The true Christian lives in union with Jesus, suffers in union with Jesus, and dies in union with Jesus. As united to Jesus, to him there is no condemnation, for he is fully and for ever justified; therefore he is delivered from all the penal consequences of sin, and the very nature of death is changed. "He that liveth, and believeth in me," said Jesus, "shall never die." And again, "He that keepeth my sayings, shall never see death." Death to the believer is,—

REST. Sweet rest. Rest for the body in the grave, and rest for the soul in the presence of Jesus. It is rest after *toil*, the labour of the body for temporal good, and the labour of the soul for spiritual. Much work, and hard work, has the Christian now, but it will soon be over; and of such Christian la-

bourers, it will be said, "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." It is rest after *suffering*, and how much some of the Lord's people suffer. What bodily afflictions. What domestic trials. What reverses in the world. What severe conflicts, and exercises of soul! Some seldom eat with pleasure, or sleep soundly, or know what earthly pleasure is. To such, death will be a delightful rest, for then, "their sun will no more go down, but the days of their mourning will be ended." It will be rest, after *a long and wearisome journey*. The Christian finds the present world a wilderness, a desert, an enemy's country. The way is rough and rugged. The journey is exhausting and discouraging. The changes are numerous and great. The seasons are changeable and trying. He is often disheartened because of the way. But at death the journey ends. The wilderness is crossed. The land of rest, promised rest, lies spread out before him, and he realises the pleasing fact, that he is going to take possession. He then enters into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. It is rest after *conflict*, as a soldier of the cross he has had to do battle with sin, with self, with the world, and with principalities and powers in heavenly places. Many a wound has he received. From many a bruise has he suffered. Long, tedious, and

trying has been the campaign; but now, only one enemy remains, and that is a conquered one, "the enemy that shall be destroyed last, is death." Then, no more opposition, no more war, but all is peace, and peace for ever. It is rest after many *fears and anxieties*. Often does the Christian fear, when he ought to be confident. Often is the believer anxious, when he ought to be grateful and thankful. But anxiety and fear will beset the Lord's children, and often fills them with sorrow and grief. They fear a thousand evils, that will never happen. They are anxious about many things, that never ought to occupy a moment's thought. But now the last fear, the last anxiety will agitate the breast, and all the future will be confidence and calm. As therefore rest is sweet to the weary labourer, to the afflicted sufferer, to the exhausted traveller, to the worn-out soldier, and to the fearful and anxious parent, so will the rest of the grave, the rest of glory, be to the believer in Jesus. Death to the Christian is—

SLEEP. Not that the soul sleeps, for that is still conscious, active, and happy in the presence of Jesus; but the body does, and a sweet sleep it enjoys. Yes, the sleep of the weary husbandman, is not so *sweet*, as the sleep of the true believer. His grave is like a soft, perfumed bed, and he enjoys it the more, from the thought that Jesus laid there before him. It is most *refreshing*, he will

awake and arise from it, like a giant refreshed with wine. He will come forth like the lovely flowers in spring, after the cold bleak winds, and frosts and snows of winter. It is *dreamless* sleep. No dreaming or distressing visions, will ever disturb that gentle, calm, repose. But in holy quiet, and perpetual calm, the body will slumber on, until the morning of the resurrection breaks. It will be most *safe*, nothing can by any means hurt, or injure those who sleep in Jesus. Still united to his person, still under his watchful eye, still the object of his ceaseless care, still precious to his soul, the sleeping Christian rests, and rests until the dead in Christ arise. Let us then, never look at death, but through Jesus; nor at the grave, but in the light of the resurrection. To the eye of nature, death is dreadful, and the grave is repulsive, but to the eye of faith, and as represented in the New Covenant, they are stripped of all that is dreadful and repulsive, so that an Apostle could say, "To die is gain;" or "To die is best of all." He looked upon it as the removal of a traveller from the inn, when he had rested for a night, saying, "The time of my departure is at hand." As the close of his work, the termination of his stewardship, and therefore added, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith." Blessed apostle, thine was a wearying journey, a desperate conflict, and a responsible stewardship,

but thy prospect was glorious, and thy rest has been sweet!

Beloved, let us not fear death, but let us seek such an acquaintance with Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, and who tasting death for us, did abolish death, that it might not alarm us, as shall raise us above that fear. We may so *know* Jesus, and so *believe* in Jesus, as to smile at death, and even covet it, as many have. One thing is certain, if we are united to Jesus, if we are living in fellowship with Jesus, and if we are devoting our life to Jesus, nothing in heaven, earth, or hell can harm us; and death will be nothing more than a sweet sleep to us. Nor do I suppose that the time between death and the resurrection will appear longer to us, than a night's sound and sweet sleep does. How beautiful creation looks now, on a fine spring morning, when we awake from a good night's rest; but how beautiful will all things look, when we awake from the slumbers of the grave, and see all things radiant with the smile, and the glory of God. Blessed Spirit, teach me so to know Jesus, so to live upon Jesus, and so to make use of Jesus, that I may live above the fear of death, and dread dying, no more than I now dread falling asleep, after a hard and wearying days' work!

THE CARELESS THREATENED.

THERE is a class of persons very apt to become careless and indifferent. They stifle convictions and get rid of them. They resist impressions and erase them. They get their consciences calmed and quieted. They put on a profession of religion. They struggle against the light, until it ceases to disturb them, and then sing themselves to sleep. They cry, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace; and take a dead calm to be gospel rest. They assure themselves that all is right, but never had the witness of God's Spirit within them, or the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. It is no very easy thing to disturb or alarm such, for they are at ease in Zion. But a time is coming when God will rouse them up, as it is written, "It shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees." Zeph. i. 12.

God intends thoroughly to examine his church. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. He will,

with the light of his judgments, or the candle of his word, and by the ministry of his gospel, search out, detect, expose, and punish all that rest in a mere form of religion; who rest in doctrines, but not in Christ; who depend on something of their own, instead of the finished work of Christ; who take the workings of nature, or an enlightened conscience, for the work of the Spirit of God. Who, neglecting self-examination, and never seeking the scrutiny of the soul-searching eye of God, are easily satisfied that all is right, though they never felt the salutary pangs of conviction, the joy of true conversion, the peace that flows from pardon, or the loathing of self, which proves that God is pacified towards them. Such hide in a refuge of lies. They cover themselves with a covering which is not of God's Spirit. They lie on a bed which is too short, and try to get warm and comfortable under a covering that is too narrow. Services, sacraments, or false views of truth intoxicate and bewilder them; and they settle down on their lees, and become like Moab, of whom the prophet says, "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed."

This is a most dangerous state. It is a delusive calm before a storm, which will cause the bark to founder. It is the peace of the

grave-yard, which will be disturbed by the sounding of the trumpet. God will come near to such to judgment. Perhaps he may send his gospel, as he has not done before, and it will be preached with life, unction, and power; it will discover their folly, stir up their corruptions, and irritate their souls. They will oppose it, reject it, and very probably villify and misrepresent it. They will harden themselves in sin, silence an honest conscience within them, and shut their ears against God's testimony without them, until given up to judicial blindness. Or, they will be visited with fear, trembling, and surprise; and when it is too late, the door being shut, they will discover their want, as the foolish virgins did, that they had no oil, but must have it, or be excluded from the marriage feast for ever. Then they will make vain efforts to obtain, called going to buy; or sink into gloomy despondency and despair, and be finally punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.

Reader, let us carefully and thoroughly examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith or no. Let every man, as the apostle directs, prove his own work. If we have a religion, let us be sure that it is divine; that it will stand the great test; that it will secure our admission into glory at last. Whether it is God's religion, or only man's. A searching time is coming, when with lighted candles,

God will search the depths of the soul; and if a work of sanctification is not found there, if the image of Christ is not discovered there, if the divine nature is not there, all else will be rejected. We must be new created. We must be born of the Spirit. We must have Christ living in us. We must possess the Spirit as a hidden spring of water in the soul, springing up unto everlasting life. If we have not, when God comes to search with candles, we shall be detected, exposed, and punished. Punished for deceiving ourselves and others. Punished for neglecting the great salvation. Punished for professing what we never possessed. Punished justly, punished lawfully, punished eternally. For they shall have judgment without mercy, who trifled with mercy and braved the judgment of God, without a Saviour.

Sinful, and blind, and poor,
And lost without thy grace,
Thy mercy I implore,
And wait to see thy face;
Begging I sit by the way-side,
And long to know the crucified.

Jesus! attend my cry,
Thou Son of David, hear;
If now thou passest by,
Stand still and call me near:
The darkness from my heart remove,
And show me now thy pardoning love.

THE SECRET.

"Only Jonathan and David knew the matter."—1 SAM. xx. 39.

DAVID was in great danger from the jealousy and enmity of Saul. Jonathan had no suspicion of his father's design. But he agrees with David to endeavour to ascertain it, and to let him know. The plan was laid, Jonathan went to court, Saul manifested his murderous intention. Jonathan was grieved, and came out into the field with his armour bearer, to warn David by shooting an arrow. The lad was sent to gather up the arrows, and carry his master's instruments into the city; then David came forth, and Jonathan proved the depth of his friendship, and the constancy of his love. "The lad knew not any thing, only David and Jonathan knew the matter."

Jonathan was David's superior, being the king's son. His name signified, "given of God," or "the gift of the Lord." He was heir apparent to the throne. He may represent Jesus, who is the Son of God, the brightness of his glory, and heir of all things. He is also, God's unspeakable gift. And,

what a gift! A gift that comprehends every other gift, and comprehends every good thing. Its greatness is unsearchable. We are therefore warranted to conclude, that as God has given it, he will now freely give us all things, and it was given freely, without solicitation, and without desert. Given to be our Saviour, our portion, and our everlasting all. Given absolutely, to be for our good, and to be ours for ever.

David was the son of Jesse, comparitively a poor man. His father was a farmer, or grazier, and David had kept his sheep. He was now driven out from his home, and sentenced to death by the king. But he was greatly beloved by the king's son. He may represent the sinner, quickened by the Spirit, but still under the law, and therefore condemned already. He is indeed poor. Yet he is beloved, and beloved, not by Jonathan, but by Jesus. Loved with a love more strong, more tender, and more lasting; and yet Jonathan loved David as his own soul. As David afterward sung, his love was wonderful, passing the love of woman. But the love of Jesus was more wonderful, for he loved us more than his own soul, and therefore he laid down his life for us.

The secret between David and Jonathan, consisted in a covenant of salvation, a plan to save David's life, an agreement to devise means, that he may not die, and there is such a secret between Jesus and us; and we may

trace out an analogy too. Jonathan stood up before his father to plead for David, and Jesus stood up in the everlasting covenant, to plead for us: therefore it is said, "He made intercession for the transgressors." Jonathan shot the arrow from his bow to arouse, alarm, and inform David of his danger; and Jesus sent the arrow of conviction right home to our hearts, arousing, alarming, and informing us of our danger. We were alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and we died. Then all hope of salvation by works was given up, and the sentence of death was felt in all its dreadful power. The arrow of Jonathan, brought David out of his hiding-place, to bow and weep before him. So, the arrow of conviction, brought us out of our false refuges, and brought us to the feet of Jesus. There we confessed our sins. There we wept and deplored our lost condition, and there we sought for pardon. Only David and Jonathan were present, while Jonathan manifested his sympathy, and displayed the greatness of his love. So only Jesus and the sinner were together, when pardon was proclaimed, reconciliation was effected, and salvation was brought home. The sympathy of Jesus, excited the strongest hopes; but the love of Jesus, brought assurance and peace to the soul. Oh, how sweet was this first secret interview, between Jesus and the soul! How sweet, how pleasant the tears we

shed! How humbling, how elevating the joys we felt! Jonathan sent David away in peace, with his blessing, to enjoy safety. Jesus never, strictly speaking, sends us away, and yet we leave his presence with the peace of God in our hearts, with the divine blessing resting upon our souls, and saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

There is a secret in religion, which no one knows, which no one can know, but the believer. It is made up of confidence in God, peace flowing from God, power imparted by God, and joy akin to the joy of God. Alas! how many professors are like Jonathan's lad, of this divine secret, they know not anything. They never felt their danger, were never drawn to the feet of Jesus, never witnessed his sympathy, or felt his love. They pick up the precept, as the boy picked up the arrow, and go away into the city; while the believer comes forth to enjoy soul-humbling, soul saving communion with Jesus. The best part of religion is realised and enjoyed by the soul, when it is alone with God. Then our pardon is sealed. Then our fears are scattered. Then our hopes are confirmed. Then our hearts are broken with a sense of his love. Then we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then the soul seems to flow into the bosom of God, and the love of God flows into the heart, under the operation and direction of the Holy Ghost. O sacred seasons! O delightful manifestations!

O what elevating emotions we then enjoyed! We can only conceive of heaven as the perfection, and perpetuation of the same.

Beloved, is there any secret in your religion? Any thing that you cannot put into words, or make intelligible to the carnal man? Or does your religion consist merely in ceremonies, services, and the performance of religious duties? If the latter, it is sad legal drudgery; and you are only in the position of a servant, working for life, which you will never obtain by working. If the former, your religion is pleasant, attractive, and delightful; and you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. You have the Spirit of adoption within you, the presence of Jesus with you, and the prospect of glory before you. Your sweetest seasons, are often when alone with God; your highest joys flow from a sense of union with Christ, and perfect acceptance with God; and you serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him. You have Christ formed in the heart, you hold the promise of eternal life in your hand, and you rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Reader, rest not in a commonplace religion. Be not satisfied without heart-work. See to it that you have the grand secret, as it is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

I HAVE HAD A VIEW.

A CHRISTIAN man lay dying. Slowly did the work of death go on. Severe were his bodily sufferings, and dark and gloomy the state of his mind. His friends tried to rally and comfort him, but their efforts were in vain. They feared he would die in the dark, depart and leave no sign that God was with him. The room was now still and quiet, and the dying man lay calm with his eyes closed. They knew not if he slept or no. They watched him in silence. At length, a smile began to play on his countenance, and his appearance entirely changed. He looked the image of peacefulness and joy. He opened his eyes, and looking on those around him, he said, "*I have had a view.*" A view of what, inquired a dear friend, "*A view of Calvary,*" was the reply. Once more the Christian had seen the cross. Once more he had looked upon his Saviour, as suffering and dying in his stead. That sight cleared away all gloom from his spirit, and imparted joy and peace to his soul. How could he be sad now, he saw Jesus dying for his sins, dying as his substitute, dying that he might never

die. In the death of Jesus, he saw that sin was put away, his peace was made, and a title to eternal life was given him. The sight of Jesus, dying the just for the unjust, cleared his skies, strengthened his faith, invigorated his hopes, and he felt he could die happy—or rather fall asleep in Jesus, without fear.

Reader, have you ever had a faith's view of Jesus on the cross? Have you ever been led as a poor lost sinner, to look to Jesus, as the serpent-bitten Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, for life, everlasting life? If not, I pray God, that whilst reading these lines thou mayest. A view of Calvary, or of Jesus dying instead of sinners, that they may never die, will remove all guilt from thy conscience, chase away all the clouds of gloom from thy mind, and give thee sweet and holy peace. It will end thy opposition to God, and the conflict felt in thy soul about submitting unreservedly to his righteousness. It will introduce the sweetest tranquillity into thy soul, and produce devout and holy gratitude to God. No guilt can remain on the conscience, while we look at Jesus as crucified for our sins. No doubts of God's love can live, when we gaze upon Christ, as the sacrifice for our sins. For if Jesus died for us, then our guilt is expiated. If Jesus was given of God to die in our stead, then God must love us, and love us with a love that passeth knowledge. But we see this to be the case, when by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we get a view of Calvary.

Believer, is thy soul cast down? Are you in gloom and sadness? Turn thine eye to Calvary. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a view of the wondrous Sufferer on the cross, the great Sin-bearer dying for thy crimes. This will chase away thy gloom and disperse thy sadness. This will soothe thy troubled spirit, and impart joy to thy sorrowful heart. In all thy temptations, in all thy conflicts, in all thy sufferings from whatever quarter they may come; turn from them to Jesus, carry them to Calvary, there you will get them sanctified, and at length removed. Pore not over the depravity of thy heart. Dwell not on thy short comings. Listen not to the accusations of the great enemy of souls. But at once, and as often as thou art cast down, from whatever cause, turn again to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. On the bed of sickness, when aches, pains, and weakness, make life a burden, look to Calvary. In the hour of death, when about to exchange worlds, in that most solemn hour of man's existence here below, look, look to Jesus as delivered for thy offences, as punished in thy stead, as putting away thy sin, by the sacrifice of himself. Think of the dying Christian, whose expressions caused these lines to be written, all was dark with him, all was doubt and dread, until the Spirit pointed him to Calvary, and then all was confidence, and light, and joy. O to have a view of Jesus, of Jesus on the cross, when

my heart and flesh are failing, when the world is receding from me, and eternity with all its solemn realities is bursting on my view!

Sinner, Jesus died that you may never die. He suffered the wrath of God on earth, that you may not suffer the wrath of God in hell. He is set before you in the everlasting gospel, as the only refuge from the wrath to come, as the only Saviour of lost and perishing transgressors. If you turn your eye and your heart, to him you will be saved with an everlasting salvation. If you look to him, you will be delivered from the guilt, power, and penal consequences of sin. But if you live neglecting him, if you die without a sight of Christ on Calvary, you must perish for ever. For there is no other way of salvation, there is no possibility of escaping the wrath of God, but by faith in him. Hence said the Apostle to the Ephesians, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Grace saves sinners, by giving Jesus to die for them, and by accepting the atoning death of Jesus for them; and faith looks to Jesus, and receives from Jesus, a full and complete salvation. Believe that you *can* be saved, because Jesus died. Believe that you *may* be saved through Jesus who has died. May the Holy Spirit, show you your lost state as a sinner before God, awaken in your soul a desire to escape from the dreadful consequences

of your guilt, and lead you to the Lamb of God, that you may enjoy in your own soul, the evidence, persuasion, and foretaste of eternal salvation! Then, then you will be prepared to enter into, and understand, the language of the dying saint, and with him exclaim, while your heart overflows with joy and love, "*I have had a view.* I HAVE HAD A VIEW OF CALVARY."

Go forth in spirit, go
To Calvary's holy mount;
See there thy friend between two thieves,
Suffering on thy account.

Fall at his cross's feet,
And say, "My God and Lord,
Here let me dwell, and view those wounds
Which life for me procured."

Fear not; for this is he
Who always loves us first,
And with white robes of righteousness
Delights to deck the worst.

Or art thou at a loss,
What thou to him shalt say?
Be but sincere, and all thy case,
Just as it is, display.

His blood thy cause will plead,
Thy plaintive cry he'll hear,
Look with an eye of pity down,
And grant thee all thy prayer.

THE PARTING PROMISE.

THE first-born was about to leave home. The morning fixed upon had arrived. The family one after another had said, "Farewell." The father accompanied his son a short distance, and then with a full heart said, "*John, farewell, cleave to Christ, walk with God, adorn the gospel, and* WHILE I HAVE A HOUSE, YOU SHALL NEVER WANT A HOME." The boy looked on his father through his tears, was unable to speak, and so went on his way. Deeply was he affected by his mother's words, by the kindness of the whole family, but nothing touched him so much, or impressed him so powerfully as his father's last promise, "*While I have a house, you shall never want a home.*"

Believer, God is thy Father, and when going forth into the world or to daily duties, you may hear him give you just the same advice. He says, "*Cleave to Christ.*" Let nothing divert your attention, or draw away your affections from him. Live in the closest fellowship with Jesus, carry all your cares to him, and draw all your supplies from him. "*Walk with God.*" As a child with a parent, holding earnest, constant, and confiden-

tial intercourse with him. Listen to his voice. Watch his hand. Catch his Spirit. Consult his will. Aim in every thing to please him. "*Adorn the gospel.*" By a meek and quiet spirit. By a loving and forgiving temper. By honest and upright conduct. By a wise and intelligible testimony for God. By submission to superiors, by affection to equals, and by humble and courteous conduct toward all who are beneath you in station, or talents, or education. Live as Jesus lived. Imitate God as his beloved children. Adorn the doctrines of the gospel, by carefully observing its precepts. So shalt thou make thy Father's heart glad. As Solomon said, "My son, if thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine."

As our heavenly Father gives us the same advice, so he makes the same promise, "*While I have a house, you shall never want a home.*" Home is where our father dwells, and where the family resides: and this is the scriptural representation of heaven. Jesus calls it "My Father's house;" and he informed his disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them. The real Christian can never be homeless, for God will be *his refuge* and strength, a very present help in trouble. Yea, as the Psalmist prayed, he will be for him *a strong habitation* whereunto he may continually resort. And often will he find occasion to exclaim, "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O Lord, therefore the

sons of men put their trust under *the shadow of thy wings.*" Therefore every believer may say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." No, the Christian shall never want a home, for it is his Father's good pleasure to give him the kingdom. He shall never want a home, for Jesus has prayed, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." To dwell in God's house for ever, to be where Jesus is, to inhabit the kingdom, will be to be at home in the highest and best sense of the word.

While our heavenly Father has a house, we shall never want a home, for he will have all his family around him at length. From all places and all periods he will collect them, that they may inherit glory, and share in the honours and happiness of his only begotten Son for ever. We must not look for a home on earth, if we have comfortable lodgings, we should be grateful; and if our accommodations are few, and our privations many, it is not worth our while to fret, for we are only like the traveller who has turned aside to tarry for the night. Our journey will soon be ended, and we shall have done with inns and hotels for ever. Our goal will soon be reached, and we shall be at home, and at

home for ever. Our Father's house is magnificent. Our family gathering will be large and glorious. Our joys will then be perfect, and our happiness perpetual. Not one of all the millions who will be there will drop a tear, or heave a sigh, or utter a groan: not one will be disfigured by a wrinkle of care, a spot of pollution, or the least stain of sin. Perfection, absolute perfection will be stamped on each; and all will be satisfied, as they appear in the Saviour's likeness. Let us then attend to our heavenly Father's admonition. Let us daily hear him say to us, "John, James, Mary, Sarah, *cleave to Christ, walk with God, adorn the gospel, and* WHILE I HAVE A HOUSE, YOU SHALL NEVER WANT A HOME."

Heaven is Jehovah's dwelling place,
The home of every child of grace,
  Where he his Father sees;
His journey's end, his treasure great,
His mansion, and his vast estate,
  Where saints all dwell at ease.

My spirit here renewed by grace,
Enjoys the smiles of Jesus' face,
  And waits his sovereign call;
Contented travels on the road,
With pleasure hails the blest abode,
  Where God is All in All!

THE EPITAPH.

I HAVE often derived benefit from wandering in a church-yard, therefore, I never see a church, if the gate is unlocked and I have time, but I take a turn round the grave-yard. Many a one has seen me thus rambling in a country church-yard, reading the inscriptions on the head stones, and then musing on them. Often have I been annoyed by the silly things I have read there. Surely if the dead knew how they are flattered and misrepresented by their friends after their decease, it would greatly annoy them. Only now and then do we meet with a good epitaph. But I have lately met with one, a part of which I transcribe, "*Oh, that this mouldering stone, may remind a sinner, of the mercy that may be found in a Saviour!*" This is touching! It is striking! It is calculated to do good! It is the breathing of a soul filled with the love of God, and influenced by benevolence to man.

It is sure to be read by sinners, for who but sinners will ever be found standing before that stone, and reading its inscription. It reminds the sinner of his need, mercy; and informs him where mercy is to be found,

in a Saviour. Yes, every sinner needs renewing mercy—pardoning mercy—preserving mercy—sanctifying mercy—in a word, saving mercy. He must be saved by mercy, if saved at all. The mercy he needs is in Jesus, who is the mercy promised to our forefathers; and who is the channel, through which the ocean of mercy which is in God's heart, flows down into our sinful world. Yes, yes, there is mercy in Jesus for sinners. For miserable, vile, and wretched sinners. For all classes, and all kinds of sinners. He has mercy that suits all, and mercy for all, who are willing to receive mercy from him. The mercy that is in Jesus, flows freely to the vilest of men. Every poor, miserable, condemned, and wretched creature is welcome to it. But sinners need to be reminded that they need mercy, and that there is mercy in Jesus for such as they.

Reader, my soul breathes out the desire of the epitaph for thee, for every one that shall read these lines. From the bottom of my heart I say, "*Oh, that these poor lines of mine, may remind a sinner of the mercy that may be found in a Saviour.*" Holy Spirit, convince the reader, whose eye may rest on this page, of his need of mercy—shew him that there is mercy in Jesus for him, and for all like him—and lead him to seek mercy until he obtains it! Oh, honour Jesus, by leading thousands of immortal souls to him, for that mercy that is treasured up in

him, and without which they can never enjoy pardon, peace, or everlasting life! Help me, with my pen, whenever I write; and by my tongue, whenever I converse; to remind sinners of the mercy that may be found in a Saviour. Mercy, sweet word! Mercy in a Saviour, precious provision! Mercy to be found in a Saviour, glorious fact! Mercy to be found in a Saviour by sinners, vile, base, and hell-deserving sinners, blessed news! May we seek, obtain, enjoy, and then publish this mercy to all around us.

Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

The door of thy mercy stands open all day
To the poor and the needy, who knock by the way;
No sinner shall ever be empty sent back,
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus's sake.

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell;
Its glories I'll sing and its wonders I'll tell;
'Twas Jesus, my friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who open'd the channel of mercy for me.

Great Father of mercies! thy goodness I own,
And the covenant love of thy crucified Son;
All praise to thy Spirit, whose whisper divine
Seals mercy, and pardon, and righteousness mine!

THE VOICE OF THE LAW.

Rom. iii. 19.

Every man by nature is under law, for if there is no law binding upon us, no sin can be committed by us. As the law was stamped on the nature of Adam, or as it was delivered on Sinai, we must therefore be under it. Conscience acknowledges this, and in proportion to the clearness of its light, is influenced by it. All have some consciousness of sin, and therefore all feel uneasy. All are apprehensive of condemnation, and therefore seek in some way to satisfy justice, or dread death. With the Bible in our hands, the law is plainly placed before us, and as holy, just, and good, commends itself to us. How can we object to that, with any show of reason, that only requires us to be holy, to do justly, and to love all around us? Will any man say, that he *ought* to be unholy, act unjustly, and indulge hatred or malice in his heart? If not, every one must consent unto the law that it is good, and that its requirements ought to be met.

The law speaks to every one of us. It prescribes our duty, both in its nature and

degree. It requires us to have no other God, than JEHOVAH, and to love him with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength; and also to love our neighbours as ourselves. The law being spiritual, extends to the thoughts, desires, and motives of the soul. Its demand is, that every motion of the mind, every word of the lip, and every action of the life, should spring from, and be influenced by, love; pure, unselfish love. God must be preferred, his will must be approved, and all his ways and works must be justified. We must constantly present to him a holy heart, and a righteous life. If we do not, we sin; and sinning, all that the law has to say to us is, that we must be punished. It condemns us, and delivers us over to the executioners of God's judgments. If therefore we break the precepts, we incur the penalty, and incurring the penalty, the law delivers us to be cast into prison, until the penalty be paid.

The office of the law therefore now is to convict of sin, to bring in guilty, and stop the sinner's mouth. It cannot save, it cannot give life, it knows nothing of mercy. It says, "*Do and live—fail to do, and die.*" Its requirements are so reasonable, that no creature can justly object to them, and therefore no one can complain. Consequently one design of the publication of the law now is, "*that every mouth may be stopped.*" Stopped from *boasting*, for how can a criminal, proved to be guilty of breaking the best, and most

benevolent law in the universe, boast? Stopped from *pleading* any of its own performances, for what can a rebel plead, who is taken by the officers of justice, in arms against his rightful sovereign? Stopped from *excusing* itself, for what excuse can a transgressor make for breaking such a law? Every attempt at excuse would only aggravate his guilt. Excuse himself for hating his maker! Excuse himself for wilfully despising, neglecting, and breaking the law of his bountiful benefactor! There is no excuse. Even the heathen are said to be without excuse. Rom. i. 20. The Jews were declared to be without excuse. John xv. 22. And we, like the man without the wedding garment, at the supper of the great king will be speechless, if found under the law, or out of Christ. Matt. xxii. 12.

The law pronounces the whole world to be guilty before God. Guilty of wilfully, repeatedly, obstinately breaking the good law of God. No one is, what God created him. No one is, what God required him to be. God has not one loyal subject, one obedient child, or one consistent creature, by nature. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, *no not one.*" The whole world is guilty, and "become subject to the judgment of God." We must plead guilty. We must submit to God's sentence. We must acknowledge God's absolute sovereign-

ty, which extends not only over his offending subjects, but over all his creatures. There is therefore no hope for us in the law. Salvation cannot be by works. But if there is salvation at all, it must be by an exercise of Divine sovereignty. Here then we all lie at God's mercy. If all perish, God is just. If any are saved it is because God is merciful. We *have* no claim. We *can* have none. If God does not save us, in the exercise of his sovereign clemency, we are lost—and lost for ever.

Let us not then attempt to excuse ourselves, or plead any thing we have done, or fancy we can do, but let us appeal to mercy, and cry with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." God in his sovereignty has provided a Saviour, that Saviour made an atonement for sin—that atonement is infinitely meritorious—on the ground of the infinite merit of that atonement, a pardon is proclaimed to all, and solemnly promised to every one, that believes on his name. We may therefore be pardoned. We may be reconciled to God. We may become righteous before God. We may be fitted to dwell for ever with God. In one word, as guilty, lost, and ruined by sin; we may be saved fully, freely, and for ever, by grace; and so have the mouth opened to praise and bless God for ever.

WHAT IS MY TESTIMONY?

We, as believers in Jesus—as the children of God—as those who are taught by the Holy Spirit—are called upon to bear witness for God. To every one of us God says, "*Ye are my witnesses.*" By our conduct and conversation, by our spirit and temper, we bear our testimony, and all around us hear or see it. We profess to bear witness for God, and in favour of real religion, but, *what is our testimony?* The world pays more attention to our conduct than it does to our words. If we say that in comparison with Christ we esteem gold as dross, and yet devote our principal energies, most of our time, and all our talents to the getting of gold, they will not believe us. Or, if we say that to sit at the feet of Jesus, hear his words, and hold communion with him is the "one thing needful;" and yet allow our time to be swallowed up in pursuit of earthly good, they will not give us credit for speaking the truth. Let us then for a few minutes attend to this question, "*What is my testimony?*" Am I understood?

What is my testimony in my family? Do

I practically testify to all about me that I esteem all God's precepts in all things to be right, and that I hate every false way? Am I scrupulously honest—truthful—sincere? Do I show by my general conduct that I consider nothing vile but sin, or degrading but deceit? Is it clear to all about me that I realise the omnipresence of God, and desire to please him above every thing beside? Would my children, if they spoke honestly, say, "Well, my father, or my mother, believe the Bible, and make it their daily rule. They live as if God were present, and as if they considered it their highest honour and their greatest happiness to please him." Or, would our servants say, if they spake truly, "Well, my master, or my mistress, are certainly what they profess to be; for they always act as in God's sight, and as if they considered it the chief end of their life to serve and glorify him." Such should be the case, and such would be the case, if we felt that it was the chief end of our life to honour God and convince the world that the holiness God requires is beautiful; and the love which the Bible says God has displayed, is a great fact. Let us therefore seriously inquire, *What is my testimony in the family?* And, *is my testimony understood?*

What is my testimony in the world? The eye of the world is always on the church, to see what it is doing; and the ear of the world is always open to the church, to hear what it

is saying. The worldling is a keen observer of the Christian. He expects us to copy the example of our Master, to do as we say, and be what we profess. Do we then testify to the world, that the works thereof are evil? Not merely by speaking against them, but by avoiding them, and practising the opposite virtues. If the world practices deception, are we sincere? If the world cheats, are we scrupulously honest? If the world lies, do we always and every where speak the truth? If the world practices tricks in trade, do we do unto others as we would they should do unto us? If the world is proud, are we humble? If the world is covetous, are we liberal? If the world is drunken, are we temperate in all things? If the world is licentious, are we chaste? If the world is—but I must not enlarge, are we unlike the world, not in the harmless, but in the hurtful; not in the innocent, but in the sinful; not in the indifferent, but in the essential? What is our testimony in the world? Is it that we seek first and principally the kingdom of God—that we prefer spirituals to temporals—that we regard eternity before time, and the approbation of God more than the honour that cometh from man? Is our testimony understood by the world? If not, can it be plain? Can it be striking? Can it be what God requires, and what we profess?

It is to be feared that many of us do not

bear a true and correct testimony for God. We are not what we ought to be in our families. We are not what we ought to be in the counting-house, behind the counter, in the warehouse, or in our daily occupation. And the great reason is, we are not what we ought to be in the closet. We are really, what we are alone before God. But, if we are what we ought to be before God, we shall be what we ought to be before men. We always carry into the world the effects of the closet. If the heart is right, the life will not be wrong. If we understand what a profession of religion involves and requires; and if we possess as well as profess religion, we shall bear a testimony to its excellency and power, in all the walks of life. How many professors misrepresent religion! How many cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of by their misdeeds! How many cause the name of God to be blasphemed, by their frauds, deception, and selfishness, practiced and indulged in under a profession of religion!

Let us then, each one for himself, put the question, *What is my testimony?* As a husband, what is my testimony to my wife? As a wife, what is my testimony to my husband? As a parent, what is my testimony to my children? As a child, what is my testimony to my parent? As a servant, or an assistant, what is my testimony to my employers? As a master, or mistress, what is

my testimony to my servants? As a tradesman, what is my testimony to my customers? As a customer, what is my testimony to my tradesmen? As a minister, what is my testimony to my hearers? As a believer, what is my testimony to my pastor? Do we all testify that Jesus is the Christ—that his glorious work is our salvation—that his precepts are our rule—that his life is our example—that his will is our pleasure—that to secure his approbation is our aim—and that to advance his cause, spread his truth, honour his name, and in every possible way to bring glory to him, is the grand end of our life!

So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess,
So let our works and virtues shine
To prove the doctrine all divine.

Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honours of our Saviour God;
When the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.

Our flesh and sense must be deny'd,
Passion and envy, lust and pride;
While justice, temperance, truth and love
Our inward piety approve.

Religion bears our spirits up,
While we expect that blessed hope,
The bright appearance of the Lord,
And faith stands leaning on his word

THE SABBATH OF THE SOUL.

THE Lord's day is an invaluable blessing. Then we leave the world, meet together in the house of God, enjoy social worship, and listen to the great truths of the everlasting gospel. But every Lord's day is not a Sabbath, for what between domestic anxieties, worldly cares, the heart's corruptions, and the temptations of Satan, we sometimes have little enjoyment of the Lord's day. Yet the soul has its Sabbaths, and blessed Sabbaths they are. Not confined to the Lord's day, but whenever the Lord in his sovereignty, sees fit to indulge it with a visit. There can be no such Sabbath, without the sensible presence of God; for the enjoyment of his presence, is the principal thing in it.

The Sabbath of the soul is kept in Christ. There God meets us, and there we meet the Lord. There God loves us, and manifests himself to us; and then we love God, and open our hearts to him. There we see the law, without its terrors; and read the gospel, in all its glories. In the finished work of Christ, we rest too. In that work, God sees his law magnified, his justice satisfied, and all

his perfections harmonised; and in that work, the sinner sees his debts paid, his obligations cancelled, his discharge procured, and his title to everlasting life made out. Here his conscience finds solace, and obtains peace; here the anxious, troubled soul finds rest; and here the weak and fearful heart find grace; yea, the whole inner man finds satisfaction and joy. In Christ, and reposing on his finished work, the soul can enjoy a Sabbath, but no where else.

The Sabbath of the soul, consists very much in communion with God. In the outgoings of the heart to God, and the in-comings of grace from God. The word of God becomes a living, speaking, heart-affecting word. Sweet portions of it flow into the mind, banishing fear, care, and all that troubles; and imparting a sacred peace, a holy calm, and a divine joy. Then, we forget the troubles of the past, dread nothing in the future, and at present, love, praise, and bless the Lord. Now his goodness appears to be endless, his mercy infinite, his justice beautiful, his holiness lovely, his grace wonderful, and his love passing knowledge. We are wholly taken up with God, and we feel as if God was wholly taken up with us. Such are blessed seasons, sweet foretastes of the everlasting Sabbath. They wean us from earth, and make us long for heaven. Yes, the soul has its Sabbaths, may I often enjoy them.

Reader, do you enjoy the Sabbaths of the soul? Does your weary spirit bathe in the fountain of life? Do you feed on the heavenly manna, and drink of the water, which Jesus only gives. Life is but a poor thing without this. Religion is but a form without this. Seek, oh, seek grace, to enable you to enter into Christ, to rest on his finished work, to obtain peace of concience, and to hold sweet and hallowed friendship with God! The religion, that does not bring us to God, conform us to Christ, give us rest of soul, and enable us to keep holy Sabbath, is not the religion of Christ. Blessed Comforter, Holy Spirit of God, grant unto us that we may often, very often, enjoy THE SABBATH OF THE SOUL!

O that our thoughts and thanks may rise,
As grateful incense to the skies;
And draw from heaven that sweet repose
Which none, but he that feels it, knows.

This heavenly calm, within the breast,
Is the dear pledge of glorious rest,
Which for the church of God remains,
The end of cares, the end of pains.

With joy, great God, thy works we view,
In various scenes, both old and new;
With praise we think on mercies past;
With hope, we future pleasures taste.

LIKEMINDED WITH CHRIST.

I HAVE been thinking of my beloved Lord and Master, and I ought to think of him more than I do; and I ought to think differently of him to what I do. Thoughts of Christ are pleasant, if the mind is at all spiritual; and they are always very profitable. O to think well of Christ, and much of Christ! Well, as I was thinking of Jesus, I saw very distinctly, that I ought to resemble him more than I do. He is my model, and in every thing I ought to seek to be like him. I have often looked at this subject in general, but I want now to dwell upon a few points in particular, for I find that generals do not affect me, so much as particulars. The Apostle says, "Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." This was a humble mind. A meek, gentle, lamblike mind. Or, I might say in one word, it was a holy mind. But I have been musing upon what the mind of Christ would be upon several subjects, and I have come to the conclusion, that my Lord and Master

Looked upon sin as the greatest evil. I doubt not but he had very vivid, and painful

views of sin. What he saw and heard went to his very heart. Therefore he bore testimony against sin all through his life, and then died to make an atonement for it. He saw sin as it affected God, and as it debased, degraded, and injured man. He saw it as disturbing God's order in creation, as fighting against God in providence, and as manifesting the bitterest enmity against God in grace. Oh, how Jesus hated sin! He resisted unto blood, striving against it. Now I want to be likeminded with Christ on this point. I am apt to be more affected with afflictions, than with sin. To shrink more from pain, than from transgression. I would never sin without a sigh, or hear sin without a tear: but, alas! I very often do. Sin within me, and as committed by me, should be especially loathed and lamented. Sin in others around me, should lead me to sympathise with God, as insulted; and with the sinner, as insanely exposing himself to eternal woe. The object of Jesus was to get rid of sin, and this should be my object too. For this he lived, died, and sent the Holy Spirit into our world: and this object will be accomplished in the end. I ought to strive against sin in myself, and lovingly reprove sin in others. My object should be to rescue sinners, and get rid of sin. The Lord Jesus

Looked upon holiness as the greatest good. By holiness, I mean, exact conformity to the

law of God. Supreme love to God, and fraternal love to men. Love to all men, to every man. Love as the motive influencing every action, regulating every desire, and directing every effort. Hating nothing but sin. Opposing nothing but sin. Endeavouring by all means to promote the pure, the gentle, and the orderly. Making God's will the rule, and God's glory the end of every action. Jesus was perfectly holy himself. He loved holiness wherever he saw it. He even died to introduce, and spread it in our world. He ever looked on holiness, or an exact conformity to God's moral attributes in all things, as the greatest good. This is just what I should do. This is just what I desire. But I have to mourn over the depravity of my heart, which betrays me into levity, thoughtlessness, anger, and gloom; so that instead of being likeminded with Jesus, I am at times likeminded with Satan. O Lord, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me; that I may admire, desire, and seek holiness of heart and life as the greatest good. Jesus also

Looked upon the salvation of souls as the greatest work. He never seemed to think about wealth, or fame. His heart was set upon saving souls from death. For this he taught. For this he wrought. For this he suffered. For this he died. For this he still pleads in heaven. This was what he

called his "Father's business." This was *his* meat and drink. For this his prayers were offered, and to this all his mightiest efforts were directed. He travailed in birth for souls, and he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. Holy and beneficent Saviour, I cannot but admire thy disinterested love—I cannot but approve of thy glorious design—I cannot but feel ashamed, that I so little resemble thee! How few, how very few among us, engage in the work of seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as the greatest, and most honourable employment, in which we can be engaged! My soul, I charge thee to seek grace, that in this point I may be likeminded with Jesus, and daily, hourly, seek instrumentally, to save souls from death. O Lord, let it please thee, to stir us all up, that like thy beloved Son, we may prove to all around us, that we consider the salvation of souls, as the greatest work. Jesus

Looked upon glorifying God as the greatest end. We can aim at nothing higher, we should aim at nothing less. He always realized the presence of his Father—subjected his will to the will of his Father—and sought in every action to please his Father. Always, and every where, he carried about in his bosom, the consciousness that his Father was pleased with him; and that he was accomplishing the great end, for which he came into the world. He could say with confi-

dence, before he went to the cross, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." This is just what I ought to be always doing. This should be my constant aim. In every breath I draw, in every thought I think, in every word I speak, in every act I perform, I ought to glorify God. If I was likeminded with Jesus, I should set my heart upon it and be always aiming at it. O for grace so to sanctify my nature, and regulate my conduct, that whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I may do all to the glory of God. Especially may I endeavour so to spread the truth, walk in the world, and speak to sinners, with a view to their salvation, and immediate conversion to God, that God may be glorified in me and by me.

Brethren, do we sufficiently set our minds upon being likeminded with Christ. If convinced that we do not, ought we not to confess and deplore our sin before God, seeking grace that henceforth we may think and act, as Jesus thought and acted? The proper end of conviction, is conversion; and what is conversion, but turning from the wrong to the right: turning from self and sin, to God and holiness. Jesus is our standard, by which we should measure ourselves. Jesus is our pattern, to which we should conform ourselves. As Jesus walked, so we should walk. As Jesus acted, so we should act. As Jesus thought, so we should think. O that like

Jesus, we may, as believers, look upon sin as the greatest evil, and endeavour by all means to avoid it—upon holiness as the greatest good, and strive by all means to acquire it—upon the salvation of souls as the greatest work, and throw all our powers and talents into it—and upon the glory of God as the greatest, the highest end, and evermore in all we purpose, plan, or do, pursue it! Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ, we appeal to thee, to make us like Jesus; work in us, and give grace to us, that we may resemble him; that so living, we may live to the Lord; or dying, die to the Lord. Amen.

My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in thy word,
But in thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters.

Such was thy truth, and such thy zeal,
Such deference to thy Father's will,
Such love, and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe and make them mine.

Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witness'd the fervour of thy prayer;
The desert thy temptations knew,
Thy conflict and thy victory too.

Be thou my pattern; make be bear
More of thy gracious image here;
Then God the judge shall own my name
Amongst the followers of the Lamb.

A SWEET THOUGHT.

I HAVE been reading an interesting obituary of a young person who passed through many painful, and some severe exercises of mind, but was at length brought into a state of settled peace and joy in God. God manifested himself to her in Christ. She had a view of God's glory in the person of his Son, and this banished all her doubts and fears, and made her happy. God in Jesus is love. He is the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. He is the God of patience and consolation. The God of peace, and the God of all grace. In him is every thing to attract us to him, but nothing to terrify or drive us from him. The young person I was reading of felt this, and in speaking of the cause of her happy state, she said, "THROUGH CHRIST I LOOK AT GOD; AND THROUGH CHRIST GOD LOOKS AT ME." Is it not a sweet thought, that Christ stands between the believer and God; so that if the believer looks up to God, he looks through Christ; and if God looks down on him, he looks on him through Christ. I wish to keep this thought in my

mind, that it may influence my conduct and feelings; I will therefore endeavour to meditate on it for a minute or two.

"THROUGH CHRIST, I LOOK AT GOD." For a sinner to look at God, as he is revealed in nature, with a load of guilt on his conscience is terrible. To look at God as just, and holy, and omnipotent, is enough to drive any sinner to despair. But to see Jesus, as set forth by God, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood; as having made an infinite atonement for sin, and provided a righteousness that meets all the demands of the law, and does honour to all the perfections of the lawgiver; and then look up to God, is truly blessed. For how could God show his love to us, and his desire to receive and bless us, in any way so calculated to inspire us with confidence and love, as by giving his Son to bear our sins, endure our punishment, work out our righteousness, and remove every cause of his displeasure from us. This God has done, and to show that the Lord Jesus has perfectly finished his work, and that God is perfectly satisfied with what he has done, he is now seated at the Father's right hand in glory. Not only so, but as our great High Priest he is ever officiating before the throne for us; receiving our poor prayers, praises, and gifts, rendering them acceptable, and then presenting them to God. In looking up to God, therefore, we should look at Jesus as representing God to us; and look

through Jesus to God, and then we see a God without wrath or anger; but with a heart full, and overflowing with infinite love to us. Such a view of God would banish our doubts and fears; strengthen and encourage our confidence; fill us with joy and peace; and inspire us with holy love and grateful praises. O my soul, never, never, look at God but through Jesus; or as revealed in and by Jesus, and then thou wilt enjoy perfect peace, permanent rest, and a fulness of joy!

"THROUGH CHRIST, GOD LOOKS AT ME." Yes, blessed be God, he hath chosen us in Christ, blessed us in Christ, united us to Christ, and now looks upon us through Christ. He looks upon us as righteous through the righteousness of Christ; as having made a full atonement for sin, by the the death of Christ; as prepared to answer every accusation by the advocacy of Christ. He looks upon us through Jesus, as his friends, as his beloved children, and as his honest, though imperfect servants. He looks upon us lovingly. He looks upon us with an eye of pity. He looks upon us with complacency and delight. He loves us with the self-same love with which he loves Jesus; and consults our best and highest interests in all he does to us, or permits to be done. If he looked upon us in ourselves, or looked at us without a medium, how much he would see to hate, and to provoke him to anger. But looking upon us through Jesus, he sees

us washed in his blood, interested in his obedience, and as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Oh, how I love to realize my oneness with Christ! How blessed, how unspeakably blessed it is to be viewed of God, through Christ! Blessed Jesus, I do adore thee for personating me, for representing me to thy Father; nor less for personating thy Father, and representing thy Father to me! Lord, help me all through life, especially on the bed of sickness and death, to realize and say, "THROUGH CHRIST, I LOOK ON GOD; AND THROUGH CHRIST, GOD LOOKS ON ME."

Great God, from thee there's nought conceal'd,
  Thou seest my inward frame;
To thee I always stand reveal'd
  Exactly as I am!

Since I can hardly therefore bear
  What in myself I see;
How vile and black must I appear,
  Most holy God, to thee!

But since my Saviour stands between,
  In garments dy'd in blood;
'Tis he instead of me, is seen,
  When I approach to God.

Thus, tho' a sinner I am safe;
  He pleads before the throne,
His life and death in my behalf,
  And calls my sins his own.

What wond'rous love, what mysteries
  In this appointment shine!
My breaches of the law are his,
  And his obedience mine.

"I AM AFRAID TO DO RIGHT."

"GOOD morning, Mary; what, still cast down?"

"Yes, sir; my soul is sad, very sad."

"What makes you so sad?"

"I cannot obtain an assurance of my salvation, nor exercise that confidence in Christ which I wish. Oh, if I was but sure that Jesus was my Saviour, what would I give!"

"But what do you want to make you sure? Do you not believe that Christ is able to save you?"

"Yes, I have no doubt of that."

"Are you willing to be saved by Christ?"

"Willing! It is the chief desire of my heart."

"Well, does not Jesus say, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out?'"

"Yes, but I am afraid I do not come to him aright, for I seldom enjoy peace, nor can I feel confident that he has saved me."

"As to coming to Christ aright, if you come to him as a poor, lost sinner, destitute of all goodness; and if you come to him to be saved by him, you cannot come wrong."

"But what is it to come to Christ?"

"It is for one who has heard the Gospel, and feels himself utterly lost, believing that the Son of God came into the world to save sinners, to go out to Christ in the exercise of the mind, and depend on Christ to save him."

"But is it not necessary to have deep convictions, to be harassed with doubts and fears, and feel terrible distress of soul?"

"Nothing is necessary but to feel that you need to be saved, and are willing to be saved by Christ; and then putting your trust in Christ, you will be saved."

"But if my heart is hard, if I do not feel any love to Christ, if I feel as if I must have something within me, beside Christ without me."

"All this arises from a mistake; the state of your heart has nothing to do with your going to Christ for salvation; except that the harder your heart feels, and the worse you seem to be, the more reason there is for your going to Christ. As to your loving Christ, you are not expected to love him first, and be saved by him afterwards; but you are to be saved by Christ first, and then you will love him for saving you. And as to wanting something within you, beside Christ without you, this arises from a mistake also. Christ alone must save you; his blood procures your pardon, his blood made your peace; and his perfect work includes all that is necessary to secure your reconciliation to

God, acceptance with God, and justification before God. When, therefore, you look to Christ alone for your entire salvation, and depend on Christ alone to do everything for you, and confer everything upon you, that is necessary for you, the work you want to feel within will be experienced but not before."

"But must I not feel a change of heart, and experience a great alteration in my feelings, before I can be saved?"

"In coming to Christ for salvation, you have nothing to do with that; you must come to him as a sinner, only a sinner, and altogether a sinner. If you could experience what you wish, you would depend on the work of the Spirit within you, instead of depending on the work of Christ without you. Cast your soul on Jesus, place your entire confidence in him, and you *must* be saved; for it is written, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Now to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is nothing more than to admit the truth of what the Gospel says of Christ, and to place our entire trust and confidence in Christ, that we may be saved by him, or for his sake alone."

"Well, sir, I feely truly unhappy, for our minister preached on Sunday night from the Palmist's words, 'I made haste, and delayed not, to keep thy commandments;' (Psa. cxix. 60.); and he showed very clearly that all who believe in Christ should profess Christ, and

walk in all the ordinances and commandments of Christ: that they should not delay, or frame excuses, but *make haste* to keep Christ's commandments. While he was speaking, it did seem right to me, that one who hopes to be saved by Jesus should profess Jesus; but now *I feel afraid to do what appears to be right, lest I should do wrong.* What do you think is my duty?"

"If you believe in Christ, you ought to confess it. If you depend on Christ to save you, renouncing all dependence on your own works, and even on your own feelings, then you should profess it. In making a profession of faith in Christ, you do not profess to have a full assurance of your personal salvation; but you profess that your dependence for life and salvation is on Christ alone."

"Oh, I do wish I was sure that I am a believer in Christ! But these doubts and fears are so very distressing. If I should be wrong at last? The very thought is dreadful! I am afraid, after all, I do not know what it is to come to Christ—or, if I have come at all, I am afraid I have come wrong. I cannot feel sure—O that I could!"

"Allow me to place before you the language of one who did come to Christ aright, and who lived and died happy in Christ. Mark these lines:—

"'Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;

Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly—
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.'

Here you see the believer had nothing to bring to recommend him to Christ. He simply clung to the cross of Christ,—that is, he depended on what Jesus had done and suffered alone for his salvation. He came just as he was, black, to be washed white—naked, to be clothed—helpless, that the Lord might work in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure, or, in a word, take him in hand, do everything for him, and be a perfect and complete Saviour to him."

"I must confess this gives me some encouragement; but I am afraid lest I should deceive myself, and be found building on the sand at last."

"There is no fear of that, if you build on Christ alone, for he is THE ROCK, and his work is perfect. But now listen to another, who had come to Christ, was believing in Christ, and fearlessly professed Christ. In many respects, he was a very different man to the former; but mark how their experience on this point agreed. He is addressing the Saviour:—

"'Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave—ah! leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me.

All my trust on thee is staid;
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.'

Here you see the soul needs a refuge from the wrath to come, and it flies to Christ for that. It is helpless as a babe, and it hangs on Christ alone, to preserve, defend, and succour it. It has no trust but in God, no help but what comes from Christ, no shelter but the wing of Christ. It needs, you see, everything, and it seeks for all in Christ."

"But would a soul that really believes in Christ be harassed with doubts and fears as I am?"

"Many believers are."

"But what is the reason?"

"There are many reasons; in the case of some, they do not perceive that salvation is of grace, and of grace alone,—that is, that they are not saved on account of anything they do, or feel, or expect to do, but purely as a favour. Others do not understand that the Lord Jesus became a substitute for sinners, and as such did and suffered all that could be required of them in order to salvation; and that all that Jesus Christ did and suffered is placed to the account of all who are willing to be saved by him, and put their whole trust and confidence in him. Others think that they must look into themselves for a warrant to believe in Christ; and that unless they have experienced a certain

amount of conviction of sin, distress of mind, and trouble of soul, they are not at liberty to look to Christ, and expect a full salvation from him. Others, looking within themselves, instead of looking away from themselves to Christ, conclude that if they were authorised to hope in Christ, they should experience a deep sorrow for sin, an ardent thirst for holiness, and much peace and comfort; and that unless they find these things within themselves, they ought not to conclude that Christ will save them. Once more, though this is not all the reasons, but many lay down a certain rule by which they expect God to work with them, and fix on certain marks and evidences as essential to their salvation; and not finding these in themselves, they are tossed about on the waves of uncertainty, and are filled with the most distressing doubts and fears."

"What then would you advise me to do?"

"I would advise you to get rid of all your own religious notions as soon as you can, go to God's word as a little child, and pray earnestly for the teaching of the Holy Spirit to enable you to understand it, and beseech him also to bring it home with power to your heart. At the same time, take the eye off everything within you and about you, and fix it on the Lord Jesus Christ, as delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Look at Jesus as taking the sinner's nature, putting himself in the sinner's

place, obeying the law in the sinner's room, and dying on the cross in the sinner's stead. Consider that Jesus died, and suffered all he did, on purpose that it may not be necessary for sinners to do it; that so they may be saved by grace, without the works of the law: and that having done and suffered all that is requisite to save sinners, in accordance with the law and justice of God, he is prepared—he is willing—yea, he is very desirous to save any sinner, and every sinner that is willing and desirous to be saved by him."

"But does not Christ object to save any one? Will he save all that *desire* to be saved by him?"

"He will. No one was ever heartily willing to be saved by Christ, but Christ saved that soul. No one ever desired to be saved by Christ, but Christ desired to save that soul, and did save it. There can be no doubt upon this point, for no one is willing to be saved by Christ, until the Holy Spirit has made him so. No one ever desired to be saved by Christ alone, until the Holy Spirit had generated that desire in the soul. If, therefore, we can discover a willingness to be saved by grace, a desire to be saved only by Christ, we trace the work of the Holy Spirit; and wherever we can trace the work of the Holy Spirit, we are sure that there is the counterpart of that work in the Saviour's heart. If we are willing to be saved by him,

he was willing to save us first; and if we desire to be saved by Christ, it is just because Christ desired to save us."

"If, then, I am willing to be saved by free grace—if I really desire to be saved by Christ alone—may I conclude that the Holy Spirit has begun a good work in my heart?"

"You may."

"And what about professing Christ."

"Well, if you renounce self entirely in the matter of salvation, and depend on Christ alone—if you love the Lord's people, and wish to be numbered with them in life and in death—I should say, profess this. If you think proper, you may say, when you propose to make the profession, 'I do not profess to be fully assured of my everlasting safety; but I do profess that I am looking to Jesus, hoping in Jesus, and trusting in Jesus alone.' Or, 'All I profess is, that I am a poor sinner, relying on the glorious Saviour, and trusting my everlasting all in his hands; and, this being the case, I wish to be baptized in his name, sit down at his table, and be numbered with his people, though the unworthiest of them all.' This would be honest, and, I think, Scriptural; and in doing so I doubt not but you would enjoy much peace; for, while we discard all idea of merit or desert, we find, with the Psalmist, that in keeping his commandments there is a great reward."

THE RULING WILL.

"He doeth according to his will."—DAN. iv. 35.

So said Nebuchadnezzar, after his severe trial and restoration. And this is a lesson which we had need to learn, and have impressed upon our minds; for though in words we confess it, we are not properly affected and influenced by it. The will of God is the law of the universe, and the rule of his procedure with his creatures. His will cannot be wrong, because his nature is perfect, and is characterized by justice, holiness, and love. There are many things in nature, providence, and grace, which we can only account for on this principle, *it is the will of God*. His secret and eternal will rules all his own actions, but his revealed will must regulate ours. By the former he determines what he will do, and by the latter what he will have us do. For the former we cannot always find a reason, but for the latter we always may. His secret and eternal will, like his nature is unchangeable, always running in the channel of righteousness and truth.

The will of God rules in our *election*. That he would choose a people, choose them in his

Son, and choose them to be holy and happy with himself for ever, is according to his own will. His will fixed the number, ordained the persons, and wrote their names in the book of life. His will arranged all the means, and appointed the agency, by which they are to be brought into the enjoyment of this high and holy privilege. His will rules in our *redemption*, for his will appointed the Redeemer, gave him the people to redeem, fixed all the terms of redemption, and sends the Holy Spirit to apply it and make it known. His will rules in our *justification*, he arranged, and accepted the substitution of his Son for us, agreed to impute his righteousness to us, and to work faith in our hearts to receive it; that so being justified by faith, we may rejoice in hope of his glory. His will rules in our *calling* and *conversion* too, for he fixed the time when, the place where, and the means by which we should be turned from darkness to light, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The will of God fixed our situation in the Church, and ruled in reference to our gifts, graces, and capacities. So also as to our station in the world, whether in poverty, sufficiency, or affluence. His will rules and overrules all things for our good, and will be glorified in our complete salvation. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say

unto him, What doest thou?" His wisdom plans, his will purposes, and his power brings to pass those purposes. He wills to work, or he wills to permit, whatever comes to pass; and though clouds and darkness are round about him, justice and judgement are the habitation of his throne. We may through ignorance or depravity cavil at his will now, but by and bye we shall see that all good flowed from the will of God, and that a world of evil has been prevented by the will of God. His will may act sovereignly, but it cannot act unwisely, unjustly, or unkindly. However things may appear to us, so far as the will of God has to do with them, all is right, all is holy, and all is good.

Nor does the will of God, in any way, interfere, with the responsibility, or accountability of man. Man acts freely. He acts because he wills to act, and he wills to act from some reason which induces him to act. At no time does a man act more freely, than at the time when he acts under the influence of the Holy Spirit; for then he acts from conviction, produced by instruction and persuasion. The Spirit only interferes to produce good, or to prevent evil; and surely we cannot complain of this, especially as no coercion is employed. That some will must give law to, and rule this vast world, is clear, or all would be confusion and disorder; and whose will should, but that of its Creator and Preserver. The will that rules a world like

this, must be infinitely wise, if it is to be ruled according to any plan, or if right is to be respected; but there is only one will that is infinitely wise, that is the will of God, and therefore he doeth according to his will. That we, as individuals, as believers in Jesus, must have all our affairs regulated by some supreme will, if our good is to be secured, and our ruin prevented, is clear; but what will, but the will of God is capable of arranging, ruling, and regulating all our affairs so as to secure such an end? Let us therefore rejoice, that God who is infinitely wise and holy, who knows all and can manage all, rules among the children of men: and especially let us rejoice in this, that God is our Father, and has set his heart upon doing us good. O for calm, quiet, constant submission to the will of God! O to acquiesce in the will of God, and be pleased with it at all times! O to live, daily and hourly, yielding up my will to God, that he may direct it, sanctify it, and conform it to his own! Amen.

In heav'n, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confest,
That what he does is ever best.

THE WORLDLING COMMENDED.

"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.—LUKE xvi. 8.

HERE is a CONTRAST. *Who are the children of this world?* Worldly persons, whose hearts are set on the world. They love the world, and could they always live in it, have enough of it, and health to enjoy it, they would never desire to leave it. They live for what is worldly, either to make money, acquire fame, or enjoy sensual pleasures. They seldom look beyond the world, all their desires, hopes, and joys are comprehended in it. Every natural man, is a carnal man; and every carnal man, is a worldly man. The children of this world, then, comprise all who are not born again, all who have not the Spirit of Christ, all who love the world, and the things that are in the world. *Who are the children of light?* These are God's children, who were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. They are enlightened to see the nature, value, and preeminent excellency of spiritual things. The natural man, discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, but these do. They know,

that spiritual blessings are the chief blessings, and therefore prize them, seek them, and enjoy them. They love the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. They are in union and communion with Christ, the great luminary, who lighteth every one that cometh into the world. They live to enlighten others, being constituted the light of the world.

Here is a COMMENDATION. "The children of this world, are in their generation, wiser than the children of light." They display frequently, more wisdom, prudence, and skill. They have more tact about them, and in some things, are held up for our imitation. They fix on their end or object, be it what it may; they devise means, the very best they can, for its accomplishment; and they steadily persevere until their end is gained, or their object accomplished. They throw their whole heart into their work, expending property, time, and influence for its acquirement. They stimulate and help each other, and will if possible secure their end. Look at the idol makers in the days of old, and hear the prophet's testimony, "They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved." Or, look at a con-

tested election in our own land. See how men canvass, what self-denial they practise, what money they spend, what condescension they display, what thought they employ, what energy they manifest in speaking and acting! All feel, all are fired, all speak, all act. They write hand-bills, employ printers, and cover the walls with them. They advise, argue, reason, reprove, and almost compel men to see, and act with them. Traitors are hated. Neutrals are condemned. Such as are to be bought are despised. And yet, for what is all this excitement, bustle, and energy displayed? for some supposed temporal good—in order to send a man of similar views with themselves to represent them in the British parliament.

Now look at the children of light. They have two great objects to obtain, for which they should live and labour, spend and be spent. The first is personal, and comprises deep spirituality, settled peace of soul, and extensive usefulness in God's world. The second is relative, and comprehends, a genuine revival in the Church, and a great and general awakening in the world. The children of this world, never expect to accomplish their ends without the use of means, suitable means, and these energetically applied; nor should the children of light, for means are as necessary, as essential in one case as in the other. And yet, where do we see the same wisdom displayed? Do the professors of the

present day, encourage one another in God's work, as did the idol makers of old? Do the children of light, engage in the work of saving souls, like the parties at a contested election? Where are the canvassers? Where shall we find the men, who in order to bring souls to Christ, and to fill God's house with hearers, go from house to house, and from street to street, the whole town over? Who in Christ's cause practices the self-denial, and condescension, or spends the money, or exercises the thought, or puts forth the energy, that parties in an election contest do? But if we were as wise as the children of this world, we should act as they do. Then, every church member would be active, zealous, and devoted. In the one case every man that has a vote is looked after, and is if possible, brought up to the poll; in the other case, every one who has a soul should be looked after, and if possible, be brought to Christ. All of us should feel on this point, and feel acutely. All should speak, and speak with energy. All who can should write, and write with the one end in view, of saving souls from death. But, alas! the worse are the wiser. The children of this world, condemn the children of light. Until every church of Christ, feels as deeply, for the conversion of sinners around; and exerts itself as much, to bring souls to God, as our boroughs and counties do, in returning representatives to parliament, the world will condemn the church, and the Master's censure will be deserved.

If the Lord's people could only lose sight of their minor differences, and be as decided, as earnest, as active, as self-denying, in Christ's cause, as politicians are in theirs, we should soon see a glorious work wrought, and enjoy a blessed revival; but until then, the children of this world will win the palm, and carry off the crown. Ought not money to be as freely spent for Christ, and to save souls, as to return a representative to parliament? Ought not effort to be as cheerfully and energetically put forth, to awaken sinners to a sense of their danger, as to carry a borough election? Ought not professors as decidedly to take part with Christ, and his cause, as the children of this world do, in the case of a contested election? What, O what has Jesus done for us? What has Jesus given us? What has Jesus promised us? Surely, surely, shame ought to cover us, if we allow the children of this world to do more in the cause of party, than we do in the cause of Christ! We cannot, I think, seriously look at the subject, without being reproved, without being condemned.

Sinner, how stands the case with you? You have a soul to be saved. A soul of priceless value. A soul that must be saved now, or be lost for ever. Have you felt as much for the salvation of your soul, as you have in the case of a contested election? Have you ever exercised as much thought, displayed as much energy, practised as much

self-denial, for the salvation of your soul, as the politician has in endeavouring to secure the election of his candidate? How can you account for your conduct, if you have not? How can you justify your coldness, carelessness, and indifference? How will you view your present conduct from the bed of death? What will you think of your present course, when you stand trembling before the judgment-seat of Christ? What, O what, will be your feeling, when you review the past from the depths of the bottomless pit? Surely every politician will rise up in the judgment and condemn you, for they were all life, vigour, and energy in the cause of politics; while you were lifeless, indifferent, and careless, in the cause of your soul's salvation! O awake, arouse thyself, and strive to enter in at the strait gate! Stir up thyself, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near! Behold, NOW, NOW is the accepted time! Behold, NOW, NOW is the day of salvation. Now you may make your calling and election sure. Now you may lay hold on eternal life. Now you may escape the wrath to come, and secure a part in the inheritance of the saints in light. Do not observe lying vanities, and forsake your own mercies. Do not trifle away time, or eternity will be spent in bitter reflections, and useless repentance.

A FULL BLESSING.

WHAT a blessing is the gospel—the gospel of Christ. The good news of a Saviour, and such a Saviour. No less a person than God's only begotten Son. God manifest in the flesh. God appearing for us—for us in our nature—not only in our nature, but in our world. This Saviour therefore is *powerful.* So powerful that he can save the greatest sinner, from the greatest guilt, under the most dangerous circumstances. The Saviour is *gracious.* So gracious that he will save any one. He will save all who apply to him. He will save gratuitously, without money and without price. His salvation is as free as air. He is a Saviour for all people. For the Jew and the Greek, the bond and the free, the barbarian and the cultivated. For persons in all climes, of all dispositions, and under all circumstances. No one can exclude a sinner from this Saviour, or his salvation, but himself. All who are excluded are self excluded, for the Saviour's solemn word is, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." This Saviour is *authorised* to save. The Father qualified him, commissioned him, and sent him into the world. He

comes as the SENT ONE, the representative of God, the anointed and appointed Saviour. He saves *fully*. He never fails. He never saves in part. But where he begins the work, he carries it on to completion. He saves with an everlasting salvation. This gospel of Christ, Paul was entrusted with, he published it wherever he went, and he always found it prove a blessing, a full blessing. Hence when he was writing of his going to Rome, he could say, "I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Rom. xv. 29. He expected to carry a full blessing to the Romans. The good news of a full salvation. A salvation that comprises an immediate and full pardon. The certain and satisfactory pardon of all the sins, of every sinner that believes in Jesus. Pardon for Christ's sake. Pardon in Christ's name. Pardon the moment they believed. An acquital from every charge. A freedom from all condemnation. The good news of perfect peace. Perfect peace with God, on the ground of the death of his Son. The beliver has as much reason to feel at peace with God, and to be sure that God is at peace with him, as an unfallen angel. For him sin is put away. For him perfect righteousness is wrought out. For him God has received in every sense of the word, full satisfaction. The gospel brings the assurance, that Jesus has made peace for us, by

the blood of his cross. Believing we have peace, peace of conscience; and the peace of God keeps our hearts and minds. The good news of access to God, and acceptance with God. We may come before God freely, boldly, without a priest, and without a sacrifice. Jesus is the way to the Father. Jesus is our priest before the throne. Jesus is our one, all-sufficient, and infinitely meritorious sacrifice. In his name, for his sake, on the ground of what he hath done and suffered, we are accepted of God: and being accepted in Christ, and for the sake of Christ, we have access to God with confidence, and may come boldly to his throne. It is the good news of adoption. For every beliver is received into God's family, placed among his children, and receives the Spirit of adoption. As said the Apostle, "Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ: and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Blessed gospel! Glorious news! Yes, to carry the gospel to a people, is to carry a full blessing!

But Paul felt sure, that when he went to Rome, he should go full of the gospel. Not filled with philosophy, or human learning, or even splendid gifts; but full of the gospel. Full of the facts of the gospel, respecting God, and his infinite love—Jesus and his glorious work—the Spirit and his gracious operations. Full of the grace of the gospel,

which fitted and qualified him for his work; while his ministry became a channel of grace to others. Full of the Spirit of the gospel, which is the Spirit of Christ, which renders the gospel effectual. He went to Rome to make the gospel fully known, in all its doctrines, ordinances, and duties. He would keep nothing back. He would practise no reserve. All he knew he would preach, and set before his hearers, the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. He went to Rome expecting great success. He expected the conversion of many sinners, and to be the means of great blessing to the saints. When we have the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, then many sinners are brought to Christ, and believers are made very much to resemble Christ.

Now, beloved, this is just what we want, A FULL BLESSING. We have a few conversions, but we want many. We have a little dew, but we want showers of heavenly rain. We have the blessing, but we want the fulness of the blessing. Our vines have a few clusters, but we want to see them covered. We have a few sheaves, but we want to see the field covered with shocks of ripe corn. O for the outpouring of the Spirit, that the gospel may be carried home to the heart, in demonstration and power! O for the arm of the Lord to be made bare, that multitudes may believe and turn to the Lord! O to see multitudes flock to the cross and to the

Church, that with wonder, admiration, and gratitude, we may be induced to cry out, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows."

Observe, the gospel is a great blessing, one of God's greatest blessings. It is a blessing which sweetens every other blessing. It brings a full blessing to all who receive it in simplicity and faith. It fills the soul of the simple believer with blessing, and makes its recipient a blessing to others. The gospel, O wonder of wonders! It is the Blessed God, presenting the richest blessings, to poor, miserable, cursed sinners. The blessings of grace, and the blessings of glory, are by the gospel, put within the reach of the vilest, most degraded, and miserable of the sons of men. The fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ is placed before us, O for grace to receive it, enjoy it, and communicate it to others, to the praise and glory of God!

Blest are the souls that hear and know
  The gospel's joyful sound;
Peace shall attend the path they go,
  And light their steps surround.

Their joy shall bear their spirits up,
  Thro' their Redeemer's name;
His righteousness exalts their hope,
  Nor Satan dares condemn.

WATCH.

THE Son of God came into the world to save sinners. Having wrought out a righteousness in his life, and made an atonement for sin by his death, he ascended up where he was before. There at the right hand of the Father, he ever liveth to make intercession for us. He "is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." And now he says to us, "Watch therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." Mark xiii. 35, 36.

Consider the EVENT. The Lord's coming. This event will be *glorious* in itself, for he will come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and all the holy angels with him. At his first coming, he shewed how divinity could conceal itself in humanity; at his second coming he will shew how humanity can be glorified through deity. His countenance will shine like the sun, his eyes will be like flames of fire, and his whole per-

son will be clothed with insufferable splendour. It will be *dreadful* to the world. Then, the present order of things will be changed. Tremendous judgments will be poured upon the inhabitants of the earth. The fearful threatnings, and the terrible predictions of Scripture will be fulfilled. Oh, it will be an awful time for the ungodly and for sinners! But it will be *delightful* to the church of God. It will put an end to all her sighs and sorrows—to all her toils and troubles—to all her persecutions and complaints. Then her union with Christ will be consummated—then the number of her members will be perfected—then her holiness will be completed—then her desires will be granted—and then her highest expectations will be realised. His coming a second time, will complete her salvation.

Think of the COMMAND, "Watch ye therefore." Look out for his coming. Be watchful and wary. *Believe and watch.* Feel confident that Christ will come, and come as he has said. Exercise faith in his word, especially his promises, and keep your eyes open. *Work and watch.* He has given each one talents, and to every man his work. There is a work that you are to do for Jesus, and when he comes, you will have to give an account, if it is not done. Find out what your work is, set about it, and while you work, watch for the coming of the Master. *Love and watch,* for love to the absent

Saviour, love to your brethren, and love to your fellow sinners, should characterise you. Exercise a loving spirit toward all, and while you do so, look for your Saviour's appearing. *Hope and watch,* for the expectation of the saints, is the advent of the Saviour. "Looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ." *Pray and watch.* Pray for more grace for yourself, for a fuller blessing on the Church, and for a glorious work of grace in the world. *Wait and watch.* The Master is in no hurry. He can take time. It may seem long, but he will return at the time appointed. "He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." He will come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. Believer, Jesus is coming. He is coming to judge the world in righteousness, and the people in his truth. He wishes you to be ready, and to be waiting for his appearing. He commands you to watch, therefore do as he commands you. Watch, believing his word. Watch, doing his work. Watch, in holy love. Watch, with ardent expectation. Watch, with fervent prayer. Watch, and patiently wait.

Observe, he furnishes a STIMULUS. The certainty of his coming, is intended to be so. He is sure to come. The salvation of his church requires it. The state of the world demands it. His own glory will not be complete without it. Our ignorance of the time

is intended to be so. Of that day and that hour knoweth no man. It is purposely concealed, and we ought not to wish to know, or try to guess. He may come to-day, or it may be a considerable time first. We cannot know the year, month, or day. We cannot tell whether it will be at even, at midnight, at cock-crowing, or in the morning. All is uncertain to us, and all must remain uncertain at present. The probability of its being sudden, is intended to be so. "Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." It will be so as it respects the world, "For the day of the Lord so cometh, as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, 'Peace and safety' then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, will Jesus come. The possibility of his finding us asleep, is intended also to be a stimulus. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. While the Bridegroom tarried, we read, that all the virgins, slumbered and slept. How many are slumbering now, and yet the Master may be very near, even at the door. Should he find us sleeping, how discreditable it would be! Sleeping, after so many warnings. Sleeping, after such loving cautions. Sleeping, after such solemn exhortations. Should he find us sleeping, would it not fill us with confusion and shame. Hence the apostle

John exhorts, "And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." And again we read, "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Not to watch for the advent of Jesus, is positive disobedience, aggravated by neglect of warnings, cautions, and exhortations. As therefore Christ will surely come, as we are totally ignorant of the time,—as it will most probably be sudden and unexpected,—and as it is possible that he may find many of his professing people asleep, *we should watch.*

Jesus will come as the Master of the house, to call his servants to account, and to see how much every one has gained by trading. He compares the talents he has given us to money, and expects it to be put out to use; and as it is another's money, we ought to put it out where we shall get the highest interest. Or, we should endeavour to use our talents in that way, which will do most good in the world and in the church, and bring most glory to his most holy name. Jesus will come as the Bridegroom of his church, openly to marry her, and identify her with himself for ever. Therefore of that period we read, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and the bride hath made herself ready." Jesus will come as the monarch of the world, rewarding his loyal and devoted subjects, and pun-

ishing the rebels, who would not that he should reign over them. Jesus will come as the Judge of all, accomplishing the purpose of his Father, who has decreed, that he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has appointed. As therefore Jesus will come, and come thus, we ought to be *ready* for his coming, come when he may; hence his command, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." We ought to be *watching*. Every day should find us looking "for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." We ought to be *waiting*, as it is written of the Corinthians, "Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And of the Thessalonians, "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." We ought to be *desiring* and endeavouring to hasten the day; as Peter directed, "Looking for, and hasting of, the coming of the day of God." O beloved, let us think less of death and the grave, and more of the coming of Jesus, and the glory that shall follow! Let us be ready, looking, and longing for the glorious event.

THE WAY OF ACCEPTANCE.

UNDER the law, an Israelite must be clean, or he could not offer a gift acceptably to the Lord. God would accept nothing at his hands, except his sins had been atoned for by blood, and his person had been cleansed in pure water. Just so, under the gospel, God can accept of nothing at our hands, except our sins have been put away by the sacrifice of Christ, and our natures sanctified by the operations of the Holy Spirit. The good deeds of a sinner, are like the offerings of a condemned, impenitent traitor to his prince, which cannot be accepted; but are considered an insult, so long as he remains in rebellion, and refuses a pardon on the terms offered. Now God tells us, that he is ready to pardon all our sins, and accept our persons, whenever we confess our guilt, and exercise faith in his beloved Son, who died that we may live. But, if we come to offer any thing to God, or to ask any thing of God, before we have acknowledged our sins, accepted of Christ, and can plead his precious blood; though he may pity us, and in some degree excuse us, on account of our ignorance, yet he will never accept us, or be pleased with any thing we do or say, till then.

Reader, you must bring Jesus before God,

as the sacrifice for your sin—you must plead his precious blood for your pardon—you must experience the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, before any thing you do or say, can be pleasing to God. The presents of a rebel, cannot be accepted. The deeds of a traitor cannot please the prince. And such are your good works, and religious services, prior to your being reconciled to God through the death of his Son. Your first business therefore is to accept of Christ, as he is presented to you in the gospel; and having accepted of him as God's free gift, to plead his precious blood, and glorious name, for the acceptance of your person and services, at the throne of God. No prayers, no sighs, no groans, no tears, no acts of self-denial, no costly gifts can be accepted of God from you, until you believe on the name of his only begotten Son. You must renounce every thing of your own, and rest on Christ alone—you must renounce every thing of your own and plead the name and perfect work of Christ alone, or you can never be accepted of God, enjoy peace with God, or be saved by the grace of God. And as soon as the eye of the mind is fixed on Christ, on Christ alone, the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit is felt, and you are clean before the Lord. Then you may come and offer your gifts. Then the broken heart, the heart-felt groan on account of sin, the sigh for holiness, or even

the cup of cold water given to a disciple in his name, is pleasant and acceptable to him. God's method is, first to accept our persons for Christ's sake, and then to accept what we present, as the offerings of poor, but well-meaning, beloved children.

Let us ask then, how is it with me? Am I clean in the sight of God? Are my sins expiated by the death of Jesus? Is my person accepted for the sake of Jesus? Do I come to God only through Jesus, and expect to be accepted of God only for the sake of Jesus? Do I present every prayer I put up at his throne, every hymn I sing to his praise, every penny I give to his cause, and every kind deed I do to his people, only in the name of Jesus, expecting to be heard, accepted, and approved of for his sake, and for his sake alone? These are solemn and deeply important inquiries. For a just God must reject both us and our offerings, if we reject Christ; and we do reject him, if we do not make him, what God makes him, and use him for the purposes for which God has set him forth. God is a jealous God, a sin hating God, a sin avenging God; and his jealousy will smoke against the man, his opposition will be shown to the man, and his justice will strike the man, who has the effrontery to come before him, rejecting the propitiation he has provided and set forth. Thanks be to God for Jesus, and for the acceptance of sinners through him!

THE LORD'S WORD TO THE YOUNG.

MAN needs a communication from God. He wants to know his nature, his mind, his will. The heathens felt this, and therefore their priests imposed upon them, pretending that their idols spoke. But their oracles were always in the dark, or in secret, and their pretended utterances were enigmatical and difficult to understand. Not so the God of Israel, he spake publicly and plainly in the days of old; but much more so since he has spoken unto us by his Son. True, and applicable, as were his words to Israel of old, by Isaiah; they are if possible more so to us, when he says, "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth, I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." Isaiah xlv. 19.

The Lord spake to the seed of Jacob, and through them, he has spoken to the young. This was an act of condescension, for they were in a state of rebellion against him; and what humility majesty displays, when it stoops to speak kindly to rebels. Besides which, it was *unsought*, they never desired, or requested the Lord to speak to them, but he did so of his mere grace. He has not

only spoken to the young, but he has spoken *publicly*. Thus he spake to Israel on Sinai, when he gave them the law; and thus he spake to them at different times, by the prophets. As publicly, or more so, he has spoken to us of old by his Son, and up to the present time by the preaching of the gospel. He has also spoken to us *freely*, opening his mind on all important subjects; especially the most important, the way of escape from the wrath to come. His addresses to us have been most *serious* and solemn, warning, exhorting, and inviting us, that we may avoid danger, and enjoy safety. Nor has he spoken to us merely once, but *repeatedly;* as he said of Israel, "All the day long, have I stretched forth my hand, to a disobedient and gainsaying people." And in the *plainest* terms has he addressed us, that he that runs may read; and he that reads aright will run. Ever let us listen to the gospel, as to God speaking to us; and ever let us read the Scriptures, as a record of God's spoken word.

The Lord has spoken to the young, bidding them seek his face, his favour and his love. We are all strangers to him by nature, and live at a distance from him. We shew by our conduct, that we desire not a knowledge of his ways. But he has love in his heart towards us. He pities us. He desires to do us good. He is therefore willing to be found of us. For this purpose, he has come down to us in the person of his Son, and has said, "Seek ye

me, and ye shall live." He has given us all the means requisite to our seeking him. Hence we have his word, his house, and his ordinances; in addition to which we often feel the strivings of his Spirit within us, and the convictions of conscience prompting us. He desires that we should be happy, but as it is impossible for us to be happy without himself, he bids us seek him. As therefore he is willing, to be found of us, as he has provided all the means necessary for us, as he desires to make us happy, it becomes us to "seek the Lord and his strength, to seek his face evermore."

The Lord has given the young, every encouragement to seek him. He has proclaimed to us his name, assuring us that he is gracious, merciful, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, but will in no wise clear the guilty. He has given us his promise, saying, "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." He has made a solemn oath, swearing, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth; but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live. Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel." He has given us his Son, who has taken away all his wrath, and given expression to his infinite love. O that wondrous testimony, how winning, how inviting, how encouraging it is, "God so loved the world that he gave his

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He has been found of all who ever sought him in sincerity, and in truth, and has manifested himself to them, as the God that heareth and answereth prayer. If therefore God has given us his name, his promise, his oath, his Son, and the testimony of all who ever sought his face, we have abundant encouragement to seek the Lord.

The effects of seeking him are precious, unspeakably precious. From seeking the Lord flows *purity*, or inward holiness; fitting us to stand before his glorious presence, and enjoy his service above. Nor only holiness, but *peace*, a sweet, inward, delightful calm, arising from a sense of our reconciliation to God, and standing in a pardoned and sanctified state before God. Not only so, but we receive *power*, power to resist sin, power to overcome the world, power to conquer Satan, and power to serve God. And with power *pleasure;* for his ways are pleasantness, and his paths are peace: and in addition to pleasure *profit*. Who can tell the benefits that flow from true godliness? Who shall describe the blessedness of the man, who seeks the Lord and finds him! He has purity of heart, peace of conscience, power with God, pleasures refined and lasting, and a part in the unsearchable riches of Christ. Let us then listen to the Lord's voice, which bids us seek him; let us believe the testimony of his word, that he

will be found of us; let us take all the encouragements held forth to us: and let us seek him with full confidence, assured that every one that seeketh findeth. Nor let us put it off, until some future time, but let us seek him at once, to-day; while he waits to be gracious, and continues to call us to his throne. Young friend hear his own sweet word, "I love them, that love me, and *they that seek me early shall find me.*"

Ye hearts with youthful vigour warm,
  In smiling crowds draw near,
And turn from every mortal charm,
  A Saviour's voice to hear.

He, Lord of all the worlds on high,
  Stoops to converse with you,
And lays his radiant glories by,
  Your friendship to pursue.

'The soul that longs to see my face
  Is sure my love to gain;
And those that early seek my grace
  Shall never seek in vain.'

What object, Lord, my soul should move,
  If once compared with thee?
What beauty should command my love,
  Like what in Christ I see?

Away, ye false, delusive toys,
  Vain tempters of the mind!
'Tis here I fix my lasting choice,
  For here true bliss I find.

FEAR GOD AND BE SAFE.

EVERY Christian will be known. He cannot long be concealed. The work of the Holy Spirit within, and the example of Jesus copied without, will be sure to betray him. Nor ought we to wish to be hid. God does not light a candle to put it under a bushel, but that it may give light to all around. Therefore, the Saviour, instead of directing us to hide our light, or keep our religion to ourselves, exhorts us to let our light so shine before men, that they seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven. We receive from God, that we may communicate to men: and while we endeavour to communicate what we have, God gives us more. Our light is increased by shining. Our grace is increased by giving. Therefore our Lord says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." Just so, we learn our way by walking in it; and we learn to know God by walking with him. "*What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.*" Ps. xxv. 12.

Fearing the Lord, was the peculiarity of real religion, under the old dispensation. The

fear of the Lord is a grace of the Holy Spirit, it is a new covenant blessing, and manifests itself in a deep reverence of God, a hearty love to God, and an active desire to please God. It leads its possessor to hate sin, as God's enemy; to love holiness, as the Lord's delight; and to attend upon all divine ordinances, and means of grace, because God has appointed them. It makes a man afraid of himself, so that he is afraid to trust his own judgment, lean to his own understanding, or to seek his own personal advantage, but in subordination to God's glory. He is also afraid to trust in man, even his friends, lest they should lead him astray by flattery or partiality; and he is afraid to encounter his enemies in his own strength, or to yield to them, lest he should grieve the Lord. He is often afraid to judge of God's mind by providences, to rest in his own feeling, or to yield to sudden impulses or impressions, lest he should neglect God's word, or be led astray. He will not move in anything of importance without asking counsel of God, or act without his direction, and above all things he is afraid of being deceived by his own heart, by Satan, or by sin. His great object is, in every thing to please God; and his great aim is, in all that he does, to glorify God. Fear keeps him from presumption, self-dependence, and trifling with temptation, and is therefore his great preservative, as it is written, "I will put my fear into their

hearts, and they shall not depart from me." Many blessings are promised to the fear of the Lord, and all who fear him enjoy many privileges; nor is this the least, "*Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.*"

God will be his teacher, and will teach him as a father does his child. Divine teaching is infallible teaching. God teaches the heart, and so he regulates the life. He teaches us our dependence upon himself for all we need; and accompanies this knowledge with the sense of our utter unworthiness to receive any good thing from him. He teaches us to ask of him in prayer whatever we desire, or see that he has promised in his holy word; and having asked, patiently to wait his time, hoping for, and expecting the blessing. His teaching will make us humble, under a sense of our sinfulness; thankful on account of our unworthiness; and diligent, in the use of all appointed means. His teaching will produce resignation to his will, fill the soul with quietness and peace, and make us happy under the most trying circumstances. Divine teaching leads us to honour God, enjoy the Saviour, realise the presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit, and highly to appreciate all covenant mercies.

God chooses the good man's way, and teaches him to find it, and walk in it. Jealous of his own heart, of his own judgment, he applies to the Lord, and often hears a voice behind him, saying, "This is the way, walk ye

in it." Sometimes he shines upon his holy word, and that like a good map points out the road. Sometimes by the secret and seasonable operations of the Holy Spirit upon the mind, he disposes us to take a certain course. Sometimes the finger of his providence points in a certain direction, and every other door is closed. Sometimes he is brought to a stand, like Israel at the Red Sea, he refers the matter to the Lord, leaves it wholly with him, and by a variety of unexpected dispensations his way is made plain. Generally he is led to defer to the Lord's wisdom, yield to the Lord's will, and right heartily to say with those of old, "Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us." In providence he only desires what is sufficient, suitable, and best for him. Food convenient for him, so that the prayer of Agur suits him. In grace he desires to possess first, and principally, what will prove an evidence of God's favour, manifest God's care, and impart satisfaction to his immortal mind. He wishes to be good, rather than great; and to be useful, rather than rich.

Reader, how is it with you? Dost thou fear God? Is thy fear of God evangelical, springing rather from love to him, than a dread of being punished by him? If you fear God, you need not fear any one beside. If you fear God, you may have strong confidence, for you will at all times have a place of refuge. If you fear God, you may live in

peace, and free from care, for there is no want unto them that fear him. Blessed, therefore, is the man that feareth always. If you fear God, he will choose your way, mark out your path, direct you in all your difficulties, and supply all your needs. Every trouble shall be sanctified, and do you good. Every trial shall bring grace with it, and turn to your advantage. You will never need a friend, while God is true; nor a source of comfort, while the covenant stands firm. To you it is given to believe in Jesus, and to you belongs all the exceeding great and precious promises of his word. Promises, which secure to you all that is necessary for life and godliness. Promises, of grace now, and glory at the end of your course. O fear the Lord, then, all ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. For the Lord will give that which is good, and our land shall yield its increase. He will bring them home to himself, by a way which they know not, and will lead them in paths which they have not known; he will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, these things will he do unto them, and will not forsake them. He will guide them with his counsel, and afterwards receive them to glory.

PRAYING FOR OTHERS.

A REAL Christian has sympathy with all true believers. They are taken up into his heart, and are included in his prayers. For them he praises God, and for them he pleads with God. As one with Christ, he is one with them. As interested in Christ, he feels interested in them. They may be poor and needy, they may be oppressed and despised, they may be weak and feeble, but they excite his admiration, and draw forth his love. How beautifully the conduct of David illustrates and confirms this. How many of his Psalms are intercessory. How often he pours out his heart unto God, in language similar to this, "*Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.*" Ps. xxviii. 9.

"SAVE THY PEOPLE." All the Lord's people need salvation. Nor is it enough that they be saved once, they need to be saved often. They are frequently in danger, and often full of fears. Knowing this, we often pray, "*Save thy people.*" Save them from the guilt, power, dominion, and distressing consequences of sin. Save them from the

malice, designs, temptations, and insinuations of Satan. Save them from the spirit, fascinations, oppressions, and customs of the world. Save them from the depravity, deceitfulness, gloom, or levity of their own hearts. Save them from the errors and heresies which are abroad and abound in the world. Save them from false teachers, hirelings, and wolves in sheep's clothing. Save them from all within them, and without them, that would lead them astray, dishonour thee, or grieve thy Holy Spirit, Save them with a present, perfect, and perpetual salvation.

"BLESS THINE INHERITANCE." They are thine own. Thou hast a right to them, an interest in them, and a claim upon them. Chosen to be thy portion, purchased to be thine heritage, and claimed to be employed in thy service, they are specially thine, therefore bless them. Bless them with thy grace, to reign over them, rule in them, and consecrate them to thyself and thy service. Bless them with thy heavenly light to discover to them their dangers, to make known to them their privileges, and to guide them safe to glory. Bless them with everlasting strength, that they may be strong to labour for thee, to conquer and overcome their foes, and to accomplish their journey to the promised land with pleasure. Bless them with delivering mercies, rescuing them from every danger, liberating them from every yoke, and raising them above the fear of death and dying.

Bless them with thy sweet presence to comfort them, and to be a guard, guide, and glory to them.

"FEED THEM ALSO." Be their Shepherd as well as their Saviour. The Lord has provided food for his people, and pasture for his sheep, and has promised that they shall be fed. He has fed them in the wilderness, in the promised land, and even in Babylon. Lord, feed thy people. Feed them with the bread of heaven. Feed them in green pastures, and beside the still waters. Feed them with food convenient and sufficient. Feed them daily, in sickness and health, in poverty and plenty, at home and abroad. Feed their bodies, and feed their souls. Lamb of God, feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water. Father of mercies, feed them at thine own table with the fatness of thine house, and make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. Holy Spirit, feed them with sweet views of Christ, with bright unfoldings of the glorious gospel, and with foretastes of the heavenly glory. Lord, feed them, for they hunger and thirst after righteousness, they are poor and needy, and unless fed by thee, they will faint by the way.

"LIFT THEM UP FOR EVER." Thou hast said, "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." Lift them up out of self, above the fear of man, and out of the reach of Satan. Lift them up above the present evil world, to sit down in the heavenly

places in Christ. Lift them up out of the grasp and gunshot of their enemies, and set them at liberty from him that puffeth at them. Lift them up above their sins and sorrows, doubts and fears, darkness and gloom, to sit down with thee as their Father, Friend, and Saviour. Lift them up into thy presence and glory, where they shall see thy face, hear thy voice, and join in the songs of the celestial world. O, to dwell on high, and to have the place of our defence, the munitions of rocks!

Observe, God's promises are the foundation of our prayers. On them they rest. By them they are regulated. By them they are enforced. We may safely pray for what God has promised, both for ourselves and others. The Holy Spirit always convinces us of our need, and leads us to pray for the blessings God has promised. He quickens us to feel our need, leads us to see our wants, draws us to the throne of grace, and then helps our infirmities as we plead for promised blessings. David furnishes us with an excellent pattern for prayer. His language is simple, and in prayer our language should always be so. His words are few, there are no redundancies. Every word tells. It is the language of the heart rather than of the head. It is the language of one who knew God, had faith in God, and could freely ask great things of God. For no small mercies does he plead, but for salvation, God's great-

est gift; for his blessing, which is the source of wealth, health, and happiness; for food, comprising all the good things of nature and grace; and for elevation, or all the joys, glories, and immunities of eternal glory.

Reader, do you pray? Do you pray from the heart? Do you pray for yourself? Here is a model for you, you need salvation, provision, God's blessing, and heaven. Set your heart upon them, and ask them in prayer. Ask for them with confidence. Ask for them with perseverance. Ask until you obtain them. Do you pray for others? Prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks, should be made for all men. You should intercede for others. For sinners, as Abraham did for Sodom. For believers, as David did in the passage we have been considering. Many have obtained a blessing, while they have been praying for others; as God turned the captivity of Job, while he prayed for his friends. Like him, then, let us pray for our friends, for the Lord's people in general, and be this our prayer, "*Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance; feed them also, and lift them up for ever.*"

NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM.

One of the Scribes proposed a question to the Saviour, which he answered: the Scribe then made a very discreet and judicious reply, and our Lord said to him, "*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*" Mark xii. 34. The kingdom of God is the kingdom of grace, now represented by the Church of God, all whose members are called by grace, justified by grace, sanctified by grace, ruled by grace, used by grace, and saved by grace. It is the eternal kingdom of the God of all grace, which he has set up in the world for his own praise, and which will ultimately melt away into the kingdom of glory. To be in that kingdom is an unspeakable blessing, an invaluable privilege; let us therefore consider,

The privileged state. In the kingdom of God. This originates in regeneration, for except a man be born again, he cannot see, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. In order to be in this kingdom, we must have a knowledge of Christ the king; for without the knowledge of Christ, we are dead in sin, afar from God, and condemned already. We must agree to, and acquiese in the laws and

statutes of the kingdom, for every one must voluntarily take the yoke of Christ upon him. We must renounce the world, for the world is the kingdom of Satan, and Satan is Christ's great opponent. We must be delivered from the power of darkness, before we can be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We must make an actual surrender of ourselves to Christ, to be saved by his merit, supplied by his mercy, ruled by his word, and used in his service. There must be the consecration of the entire person to God, to do his will, enjoy his favour, and walk in his fellowship. Just as was the case with Paul, when he said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

It is the privilege of all that are in this kingdom, to enjoy *freedom*. There are no slaves here. The children of the bond-women are not admitted here. Every fetter is broken, every bond is burst asunder, when the soul enters here. Freedom from the claims of a violated law, freedom from the tyranny of this present evil world, and freedom from the captivity of the prince of darkness, is enjoyed in the kingdom of God. *Access to God*, and *acceptance with God*, is also a part of the privilege of Zion's citizens. They may approach God when they will, ask for what

they will; and while doing so, realise that they are accepted in the beloved, and that God is well pleased with them. *Safety* and the *certainty of having all their wants supplied*, is their privilege too. They are hid in the hollow of God's hand, they are safe under the shadow of his wing. He is a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst of them. He is a sun and shield, he will give them grace and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. *Unparalleled dignities and immunities are conferred upon them.* Every subject of this kingdom is a son of God, an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. They are made kings and priests unto God, and they shall reign on the earth. White robes will be given them, glorious thrones will be appointed them, and crowns of righteousness will be awarded to them. O what a privilege to be in the kingdom of God! But let us now look at,

THE DANGEROUS POSITION OF SOME. Not far from the kingdom of God, but not in it. They approach very near to this privileged state, but they never enter it. O how many there are in this situation now. They have clear light in their heads, but have no grace in their hearts. They know the gospel in theory, but have no inward experience of its power. But no man can be saved by light, there must be the life of God within. They have not only clear light, but correct morals.

The tongue is controlled. The temper is governed. The life is regulated. But with all this, the soul is dead in trespasses and sins. There may be morality without spirituality. The life may not only be correct, but there may be a regular attendance on gospel ordinances. The preacher may be as a very lovely song, as one that hath a pleasant voice, or that can play well on an instrument: they may come as God's people, sit as God's people, hear and sing as God's people, and yet not be in the kingdom of God. There may be no objection felt, or opposition shewn to the doctrines or duties of the gospel. All may be admitted, professed, and even admired; but still the person may not be in the kingdom of God. The Lord's people may be selected as associates, and their company for many reasons may be preferred; and yet the party may not be in the secret. There may also be a form of prayer, both in the family and in the closet. I mean not a written form, but prayer without faith—prayer without the heart, without the soul; as the Lord by the prophet said, "This people draweth near to me with their mouths, and with their lips they honour me, but their heart goeth after its covetousness." They may be employed in teaching God's word, either in the Sunday School, or in the pulpit, and yet not be in the kingdom of God. Such are *not far* from the kingdom, but there is the door, they have not passed through that;

they have come up to it, but they have not passed through it. O how solemn is the thought, how searching is the fact, that persons may have correct views of truth—may regularly attend on the means of grace—may acquiesce in the doctrines and duties of Christianty—may associate and unite with God's people—may regularly bow the knee in prayer—and may employ their time and talents in instructing others in the things of God, and yet never enter into the kingdom of God themselves.

Reader, beware, for many rest short of the vitals of religion. They know nothing of a broken heart for sin, of living faith in Christ, or fellowship with God through him. They rest in a form of knowledge, or in a routine of religious services. Such may find out their mistake too late, as did the foolish virgins, whose lamps went out, when the Bridegroom came, and while they went to buy oil, those that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Or, like those referred to by our Lord when he said, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Lest we should be of them, let us carefully examine ourselves by God's word, and as in God's presence; let us compare ourselves with the examples set before us in

the Scriptures, and beseech God in his mercy to search us. O how suitable that prayer to us, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Let us set our hearts upon certainty on this point, for it is of great importance. We cannot be too sure, and it is our duty to put the matter out of doubt, therefore the Apostle says, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Many will come very near to the kingdom, but will never enter it. As Bunyan says, "There is a way to hell, even from the very gates of heaven." But it must be dreadful to come near, so near to heaven, and yet to be thrust down to hell. Professors, you may not be far from the kingdom of God, but are you in it? Do you know the king, and walk with him? Do you approve his statutes and keep his laws? Do you habitually renounce the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life? Have you surrendered yourself and your all to Christ? Are you consecrated to the service and glory of Christ? O make sure, make sure! See to it that Christ is in you, that you are become dead to sin, that you are really born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Galat. vi. 4.

FEAR NOT.

THE people of Israel in Egypt were slaves. In the wilderness they were no better than children. When they came to the Jordan, and were about to pass over into Canaan, they needed not only direction, but encouragement, and stimulus. To teach, embolden, and give them confidence, Moses addressed them, wrote his words in a book, and they are preserved and handed down to us, for our admonition and comfort. To every young believer, the Lord now speaks, as Moses did to Israel of old, "Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."—DEUT. XX. 3, 4.

Israel as a people, were distinguished by their knowledge of the true God, he had revealed himself to them, and had spoken with them, and had taken up his residence in the midst of them. Just so believers, they all know God, by the teachings of the Holy Spirit. He has revealed himself to them in Jesus. He has spoken to them in his word.

He has taken up his residence in his Church, and he dwells also in every one of their hearts. This is their distinction, they know the Lord, they have fellowship with God, he dwelleth in them, and they dwell in him. Israel were brought out of Egyptian bondage, by passing through the Red Sea, where the Lord displayed his power, his justice, and his distinguishing grace. So the Lord's people are delivered from their bonds, are brought into liberty, and set forth for the promised land, through the precious blood of the Lord Jesus; in which ransom, God has gloriously manifested his power, justice, and distinguishing favour. Israel were distinct and distinguishable from all the world, during the forty years they sojourned in the wilderness; and believers are as really brought out of the world, and are made as distinguishable from the world as Israel, and the world becomes to them a wilderness, a strange country, through which they are passing to their Father's house. Israel were a people peculiarly the Lord's, and set apart specially for himself; and so true Christians are the Lord's, bought with a price, separated from the world, and set apart by his word and the operations of his Holy Spirit, for his own service, praise and glory. Reader, are you one of God's Israel? Do you know the Lord, as revealed to your heart by the Spirit? Are you delivered from the slavery of sin and Satan, through the precious blood of

Christ? Are you, while in the world, distinct from the world—and is the world at the best a wilderness to you? Are you one of God's peculiars, set apart by his grace for his service on earth, as introductory to the enjoyment of his glory in heaven?

Israel's enemies were many and various. Seven nations, who already had possession of the land, and claimed it as their own. They must all be met, opposed, and conquered, before Israel could enjoy rest. Just so, the believer has many enemies, they are various, and they are mighty. They also have possession, and will not give up, but as they are compelled. There is Satan, the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the great hater of God and of his Christ. Nor is there merely one devil, but millions, and they are all leagued and banded together against us. They must be met, be resisted, and be overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of the testimony. We must conquer them, or they will conquer us; and only by stern, steady resistance can we do this. Then, there is the world, of which Satan is the god, this he sets in motion, directs, and influences against the Church of Christ. By craft, or cruelty, or both, the world as instigated by Satan is seeking our destruction. We are forbidden to enter into any league with it, or become its friends; and to deter us we are told, "If any man will be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God." We

must face the world, oppose the world, and by a steady faith in Christ, overcome the world. There is also the flesh, or the corrupt nature that is within us, which Satan ruled and swayed as he pleased once. This must be mortified, condemned, and nailed to the cross. Every depraved principle, every corrupt passion, every sinful habit, must be discovered, discarded, hated, and destroyed. They defile, pollute, and render us unfit for God; we must make no truce with them, but seek utterly to destroy them. There are also frequently false brethren, who like the mixed multitude which came up out of Egypt with Israel, do us much injury, and when discovered, must be separated from us. These foes form a formidable host, they are used to war, and are enough to excite alarm in the heart of the poor timid believer. But faced they must be, and overcome too.

Israel were reminded that the day of battle was come, "Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies." After the believer is delivered from the law, and is brought out into the liberty wherewith Christ makes him free, his whole life is a day of battle. Having once put on the armour, he must never put it off, but to put on his shroud. He must travel the whole journey of life sword in hand. There is no end to this war while life lasts, and frequently one of the sorest battles is fought toward the last. But there are some particular days, which may be

called days of battle, as the day of Satanic temptation. In this day all the artillery of hell seems to be brought to bear upon us. The enemy solicits us to commit the foulest sins, perverts the holiest doctrines, or fills the mind with the most horrid blasphemies. Ideas the most polluting, thoughts the most profane, suggestions the most diabolical, are thrown into the mind, and it is hard to stand our ground, or use well our weapons. Dreadful is the onslaught which Satan makes, fearful the hurricane he produces in the soul. Like Joshua with Amalek, we have to fight in the valley, nor have we daylight sufficient to finish the conflict. There are also days, when the corruptions of the heart, and the lusts of the flesh, appear to have peculiar power. Every grace appears to be buried. Every evidence of salvation is concealed. The whole work of the Spirit seems to be destroyed. O it is fearful work, when our inward corruptions rage, swell, and boil like the sea; when Satan's foul suggestions roar through the soul like wintry winds; and nothing but confusion, misery, and gloom fills the Spirit! This is doing business in deep waters, it is more like a sea-fight, than a battle on land. O it is terrible! Then there is the day of open persecution, or more private opposition, when we have to do battle for our principles, and perhaps resist unto blood, striving against sin. And the day of death is often a day of battle, for then we

have not only to contend with the last enemy death; but Satan makes his last attack, and a fearful attack it frequently is. But however fearful the assault, the victory is certain to every believer, and the final triumph will be great.

Israel was exhorted not to quail, or fear, or be down-hearted. The enemies must be met. The battle must be fought. The victory must be won. Just so in our case, and the Lord speaks to us, as he did to them, to comfort, embolden, and encourage us. He says, "*Let not your hearts faint,*" or be not faint hearted. This does not become a soldier, much less a Christian; we should set our hearts like a flint, to meet and brave all opposition. We are all liable to faint, but we should look to the Lord. "*Fear not;*" and if God bids us not fear, depend upon it, we have small occasion. Fear not, though your foes be many, though they be giants, though they be used to war. Fears are carnal, and weaken the heart. Fears are slavish, and enfeeble the hands. Fears are as dishonourable to God, as they are discreditable and injurious to you. "*Do not tremble,*" as though your God would leave you, or your foes were a match for omnipotence. Let the guilty tremble, not you. Let those who are at war with God tremble, but not you. "*Neither be ye terrified.*" God is with you. God is for you. God has promised you his assistance. God is true. To you, God is

love. For you, God will appear. Therefore let not your hearts be faint, fear not, do not tremble, neither be ye terrified. Your cause is good, your strength will be sufficient, therefore keep up your courage, for slavish fears, distrustful faintings, and carnal tremblings will dishonour God, and injure you.

Israel was encouraged, and so are we. God was to go with Israel to fight for them, and save them; and what was spoken to them will apply to us. "*The Lord your God is he that goeth with you.*" He did not send an angel, but he went with them himself. Nor did he go with them merely as an observer, but as a man of war, as the Captain of the host, as their strength and power. So is God with us, saying, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee." He goes before us, clearing our way. He goes with us, enabling us to fight. He never leaves, or withdraws his eyes from us. "*He goes with us to fight for us.*" Not to fight without us. Nor to let us fight without him. But to fight with us. He uses us, he helps us, he crowns us with success. By his providence, by his Spirit, and by his angels, he fights for us, and helps us. "*He will save us.*" Satan shall not rejoice over us, or boast that he has finally conquered one that belongs to the Lord. The world shall never ensnare to his destruction, one that is an Israelite indeed. The flesh shall never master in the end, one of the seeking seed of Jacob.

False professors, shall never lead away by errors, or stratagems, or persecution to their final ruin, one of the blood-bought family of God. Blessed be God, with omnipotence on our side, and the word of God pledged to us, and the Holy Spirit within us, we need fear no evil, nor tremble before any foe, but go forth and do battle as for God, exclaiming, "The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." Then we may be bold, courageous, and daring; assured that we shall be "more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us."

Now let the feeble all be strong,
And make Jehovah's arm their song:
His shield is spread o'er every saint;
And, thus supported, who shall faint?

What tho' the hosts of hell engage
With mingled cruelty and rage!
A faithful God restrains their hands,
And chains them down in iron bands.

Bound by his word, he will display
A strength proportion'd to our day;
And, when united trials meet,
Will show a path of safe retreat.

Thus far we prove that promise good,
Which Jesus ratified with blood:
Still he is gracious, wise, and just;
And still in him, let Israel trust.

PATIENCE.

WHAT a blessed fruit of the Spirit is patience, and how necessary for a Christian in a world like this, and in times like these. It prevents murmuring, checks complaining, and produces the sweetest gratitude. It multiplies our mercies, fixing the eye upon them; and it diminishes our troubles, taking the eye off them. It strengthens by exercise, and increases by use. It will live in any climate, but flourishes most towards the north pole. Patience is like an Alpine flower, it will grow upon the rocks, among the snows and storms; bleak winds root it, severe frosts harden it, and what would kill other plants, fosters and feeds it. It was intended to deck the garden of poverty, and to shed its fragrance in the chamber of affliction. It grows most in winter, flowers best in the dreary desert, and has greatly luxuriated at times in a cold damp dungeon.

Patience will enable a man to bear losses with calmness, to suffer pain with meekness, and to endure bereavements with silence. When Job was stripped of all his property, he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the

Lord." When Aaron's two sons were killed by fire from the presence of the Lord, "Aaron held his peace." When Eli heard the sore judgments that were pronounced against his house, he meekly exclaimed, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." When David, in his old age, was driven from his palace and his kingdom, by the rebellion of his unnatural son Absolom, and they brought forth the ark of God, intending to carry it with him to comfort him, he said, "Carry back the ark again into the city, if the Lord have a favour toward me, he will bring me again, and will show me both it and his habitation; but if he say, I have no delight in thee, here I am, let him do as seemeth him good." To crown all, when the Lord Jesus had been bound, dragged about from place to place, buffeted, spitted on, scourged, treated with the greatest cruelty and contempt, and was being nailed to the cross; he was as quiet as a sheep before her shearers, patient as a lamb in the butcher's hands, and looking up to heaven, prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

In each of these instances we see what patience can do, what it will enable us to bear, and how it will enable us to act. How necessary for us, in our dealings with the world, in the management of our families, and in our connection with the church of God. Wherever patience is, it will be tried; and if it be a genuine article, it will strengthen

and increase by the trial. Patience will take possession of a believer's soul, and possess it, keeping it in peace, resignation, and acquiescence in the Divine will. It will make a heavy cross light, a long night short, and the most painful afflictions bearable. God is its author, who is the God of patience. The word is its nourishment, which he calls "the word of my patience." The prophets and the Saviour are its examples, and inheriting the promises is its result. O for a patient spirit, that so we may endure afflictions, bear contradictions, and wait God's time for every blessing he has promised. May we add to our faith, patience; may the trying of our faith, work patience; and may the patience of hope, characterise us in life and in death.

Dear Lord! tho' bitter is the cup
Thy gracious hand deals out to me,
I cheerfully would drink it up;—
That cannot hurt which comes from thee.

Dash it with thy unchanging love;
Let not a drop of wrath be there!—
The saints, for ever bless'd above,
Were often most afflicted here.

From Jesus, thy incarnate Son,
I'll learn obedience to thy will;
And humbly kiss the chastening rod,
When its severest strokes I feel.

"WHAT ISRAEL OUGHT TO DO."

2 Chron. xii. 32.

Some duties belong to certain times, and some belong to all times. It appears that there were in the tribe of Issachar two hundred and eleven men who knew the times, and understood what Israel ought to do, and that they had such influence, that the whole tribe was influenced by them. We want men of understanding to teach; men of influence to lead; and a disposition among professors of religion to do as they are taught. It is to be feared that the majority of us know much more than we practise. We live in stirring times, but we are not properly alive to our duties and responsibilities. Oh, that the Lord would stir us all up, and put his Holy Spirit within us, that every one of us may do what he ought to do!

Israel represented the Lord's people. Like them, all believers in Jesus are chosen of God—set apart for God—have access to God—are blessed of God—and are employed by, and so honoured of God. The Lord cannot need us, but in love he puts this honour upon

us to employ us. Our privileges are great, but our duties are answerably great. God has done much for us, and he expects us to do something for him. He has not been cold-hearted toward us, nor can we justify ourselves in being cold-hearted or lukewarm toward him.

There are some things that we *cannot* do, these we are not expected to do. There are other things that we *can* do, and these we are required to do. We can *plead* with God, and we should, both privately and alone; and socially and publicly, in union with the Lord's people. We can *speak* for God, and this we should do, inviting sinners to come and hear the word, and to come to the Lord Jesus: and we should exhort one another daily, provoking to love and to good works, and that so much the more as we see the day approaching. No sinner within the circle of our acquaintance should be allowed to perish without being invited and pressed to come to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor should any Christian be allowed to fall asleep, or backslide from God, without being aroused, or solemnly warned by us. We do not lovingly watch over one another as we should. In this we are verily guilty.

There are some things which we especially ought to do, to spread the Lord's truth, and increase and advance the Lord's cause. Many things we should do *for Christ*, to honour his dear name, spread his glorious fame, and

make known his salvation to the ends of the earth. Many things should be done *for the Church*, to increase its love, strengthen its union, and add to the number of its members. Many things should be done *for the world*, to send it the light of truth, to arouse it from its death-like sleep, and, if possible, to win it for Christ. Many things should be done *for the town* in which we live, that its poor may be supplied, its ignorant ones instructed, and its depraved and vicious inhabitants may be reclaimed. Many things should be done *for the congregation*, that the Lord's house may be always crowded, that all who attend may be kindly spoken to, and inquirers and seekers meet with the encouragement they need. O how many things Israel ought to do! There is enough to employ every one, to call forth the talents of all.

In brief, every true Israelite should profess Christ, and profess him openly. Every Israelite should be visibly in union with a church of Christ. Every Israelite should regularly meet with the Lord's family, at the Lord's table. Every true Israelite, up to the utmost of his ability, should endeavour to promote and advance the cause of Christ. All who know and love the Saviour ought to be decided, devoted, thorough, and active Christians. It is therefore comparatively easy to know what Israel ought to do, but will Israel do it? Reader, *will you?*

THE RULE OF SUCCESS.

THE Most High has certainly a right to rule the world as he please, and from the perfection of his nature, we may be sure he will rule it right. But his government is conducted on such principles, as will hold man accountable, and yet leave room for the exercise of his adorable sovereignty. The work of grace is emphatically his own work, and yet prayer and faith, have very often much to do with the commencement, and carrying of it on. Every applicant to Jesus in the days of his flesh, was required to believe, and our success in prayer now, mainly depends on our faith. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." And "according to your faith be it unto you." Matt. ix. 29. Thus spake the Divine Saviour, and according to this principle he still acts. O that we had faith in Jesus, as warranted by his word, what blessings we should receive! But we have not, because we ask not,—because we believe not. Let us prayerfully look at these things.

First, AT OUR WANTS. Not so much at our personal as our relative wants. We want

conversion. Believers need re-converting, and sinners need converting. What numbers are living in sin, and dying in sin all around us. We cannot convert them, God can, but he has said, "I will yet for this be inquired of, to do it for you." Our children, our servants, our other relatives and neighbours, need the converting grace of God. Shall they have it? "According to your faith be it unto you." We want *decision.* Many of whom we have a good hope, are not decided. They have not given up the world. They have not declared themselves on the Lord's side. They still halt as it were between two opinions. We long to see them decidedly the Lord's. We want them to declare themselves, and act accordingly. We need *consecration* too. Believers need the Holy Spirit in greater measure, and in greater power, to consecrate their entire persons, time, talents, all that they have, and are, to the Lord's service and praise. O to see the Lord's people, whole-hearted in the Lord's cause, and living simply and alone for his glory! We want *elevation* also. The life that too many of us live, is a poor, low, earthly life. We are not sufficiently elevated in our views, hopes, aspirations, and efforts. Our thoughts of God, of his grace, love, and readiness to help, are not sufficiently exalted. O to see thousands converted by the grace of God, decided to be entirely for God, consecrated to the service of God, and elevated in the ways of God! Let us look,

Secondly, AT THE SOURCE OF SUPPLY. The Lord Jesus has all we need. He alone can give all that we require. To him therefore we must apply, and we have every encouragement to do so. He has the *power*. The power to melt and transform the heart. The power to decide the most doubtful case. The power to consecrate every believer to his service. The power to elevate and set us up on high. Power belongeth unto God. Jesus has power over all flesh. It is of no use applying to any one, who is not all-powerful. But he has not only power, he has *love*. Having power, he can do; but having love, he will do. It is encouraging to apply to one, whom we know can help us; but it is pleasanter to apply to one whom we know will. The love of Jesus is equal to his power. Not only so, he has *promised*. "Whatsoever ye ask of the Father," said he, "in my name, I will do it." He knew he could, and therefore he pledged his word that he would. We may therefore make sure that we shall receive, if we ask any thing according to his will. He *has given already* in numberless instances, and is as ready to give now, as then, as ready to give to us, as others. O what encouragement we have to go to Jesus for our children, our friends, our churches, and our neighbourhoods, seeing he is all powerful—all loving—has promised to hear us—and has proved the truth of his word in such numerous instances before! Let us look,

Thirdly, AT THE RULE BY WHICH WE ARE TAUGHT TO EXPECT. "According to your faith be it unto you." This embraces *confidence in God.* And our confidence in God should be simple, strong, and abiding. If God has said, he will do. If he has raised our expectations, he will not disappoint them. We may trust him implicitly, and feel certain while we plead with him. He cannot deny himself. He is never disposed to go from his word. Therefore said John, "This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." It embraces also, *earnestness with God.* "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;" that is, the energetic prayer. We must be earnest, if we would succeed. Jesus, being in an agony, prayed the more earnestly. He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears. We must be energetic too. Indeed, if we realise the value of the blessing, if we believe in the power and love of Jesus, if we exercise faith in the promises of the Saviour, we shall, we must be earnest. It embraces also, *zeal for God.* If I pray, I must work; and if I pray aright, I shall work. It is not enough to pray for the conversion of sinners, I must make use of means likely to convert them. True faith is always zealous, and is known by its costly, self-denying works. It embraces too,

sympathy with God's end, or design. God designs to glorify himself in all that he does, and if I pray aright, I shall always keep God's glory in view. If I pray for the conversion of sinners aright, I shall pray that they may be converted in order that God may be glorified. Our faith then, if it is to secure for us the blessings we desire, must comprise confidence in God—earnestness with God—zeal for God—and sympathy with God in his end, or design.

Observe, *prayer is the breath of faith.* Wherever there is faith, there will be prayer; and the strength, energy, and success of prayer, will be in proportion to the strength of our faith. *Earnestness is the life, or vigour of faith.* If our faith is vigorous, robust, and lively, we shall be fervent, energetic, and earnest in our prayers. *The promises are the food and warrant of faith.* I may pray for all that God has promised. I ought to pray for all that God has promised. But if I would so pray, I must read the promises, meditate on the promises, and believe the promises. They feed faith, encourage faith, and direct our faith. *Benevolence, or liberality is the temper, or disposition of faith.* True faith is always generous, liberal, benevolent. It will put up with anything for Christ. It will do, suffer, or give, to the utmost of its ablity, in order that God may be glorified, Christ exalted, and sinners saved. *Success is the triumph of faith.* Genuine faith will succeed. It will strive,

plead, pray, and importune until it does. It is a fire that cannot be quenched, a life that cannot die, a principle that cannot be destroyed. Once set upon an object, it will accomplish it. Once engaged in a work, like its author, it will complete it. *Delays are the trial of faith.* Blessed be God, delays are not denials. The Lord may delay to answer me at present, but it may only be to prove my sincerity, to stir me up to more earnestness, and to make me more importunate with him. Let not delays make us despond, but rather fire us with more ardour, zeal, and determination. When the woman of Canaan applied to the Saviour, he answered her not a word, he repulsed her, he seemed even to treat her unkindly, but her faith triumphed, and her commendation was glorious, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt." *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, is the song of faith.* True faith ascribes all the good that is done to God, and gives him the praise and glory of all. Let us then encourage faith, feed faith, exercise faith, and expect God to honour faith. Believing prayer will bring down the richest, greatest blessings from God. Let us then pray for the conversion of sinners, the decision of seekers, the consecration of believers, and the elevation of God's consecrated ones, to the highest height of holiness, happiness, and usefulness, that God may be greatly glorified in the revival of his church.

THOU SHALT BE SAVED.

"I DEEPLY feel that I am a poor, lost, ruined sinner; and that there is no hope for me but in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. I confess my sins before God, and endeavour to cast myself into the arms of the Lord Jesus. I often feel grieved, that I have sinned against God, and dishonoured his holy name; and I heartily desire to be delivered, not only from the guilt but the power of sin. I want, not merely to be saved from hell when I die, but I want to be saved now. But I am harassed with many fears, and am sometimes full of doubts. What do you think of my case?" So said a poor woman a short time ago.

"I think, that as a poor sinner confiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved. Do you not remember the Apostle's reply to the poor guilty jailor, '*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and* THOU SHALT BE SAVED!' Mark how positively he speaks! '*Thou shalt be saved!*' There is no doubt about it. Now no one believes in Jesus, until convinced of his sin and danger; and every one such sinner is directed to believe in Jesus, and is as-

sured of salvation. The believing soul will confess its sin, renounce all dependence on itself, or any thing it can do, or suffer, and will trust in what Christ has done. This will lead the soul to be sorry for sin, and to turn from sin; yea, it will awaken a deep, heartfelt hatred to sin, so that there will be a turning from sin, as from something that is hated; something that is very offensive, and where this is the case there can be no doubt of the soul's salvation."

"But yet I do doubt, though I seem to believe and experience all you have said. How is it that I doubt and fear?"

"Because you are not satisfied with God's bare word. You want to find something in yourself, to encourage you; or want to do something, to give you confidence. You do not perceive that it is faith alone that entitles to salvation. That is to say, that God promises to save of his mere grace, every one that trusts wholly, and solely, on what Jesus Christ has done and suffered. So that, if I believe God's testimony, and trust my soul's salvation to Jesus Christ alone, I shall surely be saved."

"But must I not experience a great change in myself?"

"You have experienced a great change in yourself, if you now believe God, and trust in the Lord Jesus, for you did not do so once. You now feel that you are a poor lost sinner, you did not always feel so. You

are now concerned about your salvation, you were not always so concerned. You are now willing to venture your soul on Christ, and be saved for the sake of what he has done and suffered, you were not always willing to do so. There is a great change in you, and it will be still greater as you exercise a more simple faith in Christ, and more heartily believe God's word."

"But I do not feel as I wish to feel, nor as I think the Lord's people feel."

"Perhaps not, but your feelings will be regulated by your faith. You are not to believe, because you feel; but you will feel, because you believe. You are to believe, because God has given you his word; and if you believe God's word, you will rest on the finished work of Christ for your salvation; this will bring peace to your conscience, and joy to your heart; this will fill you with grateful love, and grateful love will lead you to own Christ, obey Christ, and rejoice in Christ."

"Am I then to believe in Jesus, and expect him to save me, irrespective of what I feel within me?"

"Exactly so, his blood cleanses from all sin, and his righteousness justifies from all things; and the entire merit of his blood and righteousness is placed to the account of every one that believes in him. It is thus we are saved, and thus you see salvation is of grace. All our works, and all our feel-

ings are excluded, it is by believing, and by believing only; as Christ himself said, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

"Then let my feelings be what they may, I am to look to Jesus, depend on Jesus, and expect to be saved by him."

"Just so! 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' The resurrection of Jesus, proved that his work was complete, that his word was true, and that his promises would be fulfilled; if therefore I believe in his resurrection, and confess my dependence upon him, and my faith in him, I shall be saved."

"Oh, that I could always keep these views before my mind, and act upon them, how happy I should be!"

"Yes, you would be happy, and in order to this, let the word of God be your companion, and ask for the Holy Spirit to be your daily teacher, to work faith in your heart, and to glorify Jesus before your mind. It is his office and work to glorify Christ; and the way in which he does this, is by stripping the sinner of all his self-righteousness, emptying him of all his supposed goodness, and giving him to feel more and more his own weakness; so that he is obliged to look

to Christ for a perfect righteousness to justify him, for all the grace necessary to sanctify him, and for the strength required to enable him to perform duty and persevere to the end."

"Then Christ is literally everything to the soul he saves; and the soul has to look to him for all, and trust him to do all."

"Yes, Jesus is the Saviour, not the Helper of the sinner. All the sinner needs, he furnishes, for all the sinner's transgressions he answers, and all the sinner's maladies he heals. From first to last salvation is by grace, through faith; so boasting is excluded, and God in Christ is glorified."

If all the sins that men have done,
In will, in word, in thought, in deed;
Since worlds were made, or time began;
Were laid on one poor sinner's head;
The streams of Jesus' precious blood,
Apply'd, removes the dreadful load.

Then hear, ye trembling sinners, hear,
Th' inviting voice of Christ, and live:
With humble confidence draw near,
For he *commands* you to believe;
Believe and fly to him alone,
Believe, and heav'n is all your own.

THE BROTHERLY COVENANT.

"They remembered not the brotherly covenant."—AMOS i. 9.

THE brotherly covenant in this passage refers to the league between Solomon king of Israel, and Hiram king of Tyre, which in the day of Israel's trouble was forgotten and violated. How many forget their friends in adversity, and the obligations they are under to sympathise with them and assist them. The proverb very well says, "Prosperity makes friends, but adversity tries them." Fine weather friends, like tender flowers, fade and die in the winter of trouble and trial. What a mercy to have a friend that loveth at all times, and to know one brother born for adversity, who never forgets the "brotherly covenant."

But our object is not to think or write about the Tyrians, or the Jews, or the Edomites, or of selfish friends in general. Our thoughts are going out towards the church of Christ, which is a holy brotherhood. Every believer is a brother to every other believer, and Jesus is the elder brother of

the whole. Our church compact is a "brotherly covenant," however it may be expressed, or in whatever way we entered into it. In the church of Jesus we profess to be one with Jesus, and one with each other; to form one household, one family, one flock. And we have covenanted to love one another, or to carry out our Lord's new commandment, who said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Not at certain times, but at all times. Not under certain circumstances, but under all circumstances. Not for certain qualities, or any excellency of disposition, but for Christ's sake. Yes, we agree to love all that Jesus loves, whether rich or poor, sick or healthy, learned or illiterate. If Jesus loves them, we ought. If Jesus loved them so as to die for them, surely we may so love them as to live with them, walk with them, and work with them. When, therefore, we treat any of the members of the church with neglect, or contempt, or coldness, or indifference, we forget the "brotherly covenant," and fall into the sin of Tyre.

In the "brotherly covenant," we agree and engage to assist each other in our various duties, trials, and tempations, so far as Providence gives us the opportunity, and grace the ability to do so. It is true, prudence is to be used; we are not to assist the extravagant, the speculating, or the wasteful, in any

way that would encourage them in their faults, or foster their follies. But in sickness, poverty, bereavements, or temptations, we are to show a loving heart, use a tongue regulated by "the law of kindness," and open our hand wide to our poor brother, if God has given us the means. If we neglect to visit the sick, the widow, and the fatherless —if we refuse to help the poor and indigent of the Lord's flock,—if we omit to speak kind and loving words to the heart-broken or tempted of the Lord's family, we forget the "brotherly covenant," dishonour our profession, and grieve our loving Saviour.

In the "brotherly covenant," we agree to walk together, and act in union in carrying out the precepts of the New Testament, and in carrying on the Lord's cause. As the army of the Lord of hosts, we are to present a united front to the foe; and as the Lord's witnesses, we are all to speak the same thing in witnessing to the fallen world. We should therefore meet with each other, cleave to each other, and walk and work together. When therefore any form parties, detach themselves from the main body, and go forth following their own fancy, or indulging a love of singularity, or spiritual pride, they remember not the "brotherly covenant," but they grieve the brotherhood, and sin against Christ.

Let me then, in future, keep the "brotherly covenant" in view. Never let me forget

that I am in covenant with all the Lord's people, because I am in covenant with Christ; and that I am in an especial covenant with those to whom I have given myself, and with whom I have agreed to walk, to work, and to fight the battles of the Lord. My soul, thou art bound by the command of thy Lord, and also by thy own voluntary engagement, to love thy brothers and sisters in Christ with a pure heart fervently—to assist them both in spirituals and temporals, as ability and opportunity is afforded thee—and to act in union with them for the furtherance of the Lord's cause. God has entered into covenant with us in Jesus, and he says, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth:" and the Holy Spirit testifies, "He will ever be mindful of his covenant." Seeing then we are exhorted to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect; having entered into covenant with our brothers and sisters, let us ever be mindful of that covenant, and say with our God and Father, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth."

"I FOUND HIM."

No healthy Christian can be happy without the presence of Christ. For what the sun is to the day, the moon to the night, or the rain to the soil, that is Jesus to the soul. What a day would be without the sun, or the night without the moon, or the earth without moisture, that would the soul of the believer be without Christ. And yet we often lose a sense of the presence of Jesus, and sin away the enjoyment of his love. As the church of old who retired to bed, when she should have been actively employed for him, and then complained, "By night on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him but I found him not." Jesus will not indulge idleness, nor sanction sloth. Therefore she had to arise, go about the city, and inquire of the watchmen, nor could she again enjoy his presence until she had passed by them all, and then with a glad heart she exclaimed, "*I found him whom my soul loveth.*" SONG.—iii. 4.

Here is a pleasing fact, the lost Saviour may be found; or the forfeited presence of Jesus may be regained. When convinced of our folly, when humbled under a sense of our

sin, when sighing, and crying, with ardent longing, we seek him, he will give us a fresh manifestation of his love—his great love. Again will he appear to us, disclosing the glories of his person, the beauty of his character, and the excellency of his salvation. Then we afresh perceive his glory, and beauty, and exact adaptation to us, and our love is drawn out to him anew. Glorious as he appeared at first, every new manifestation of his grace seems to enhance his glory, and bring out some fresh and richer beauty. Then, our sense of our interest in him is sweetly renewed and deepened, and we claim him with confidence as our beloved, our Saviour, and our friend. The heart glows with the richest enjoyment, the bosom heaves with ecstatic delight, and the soul overflows with the most pleasurable emotions. Oh, how precious is Jesus now! How wonderful his love. How glorious his grace. How tender his mercy. How efficacious his blood. How magnificent his righteousness. Christ, and every thing in Christ—Christ, and every thing connected with Christ—is unspeakably beautiful and glorious; so that we want words to express our thoughts, and we want thoughts to embody our feelings, which are exquisitely delightful. Who can describe the rapture of a soul, which has been walking in darkness, mourning for the Saviour, but can now exclaim, "*I have found him whom my soul loveth!*"

The delightful effects of it are many and various. It gives us *satisfaction*, the desires find the object they have been seeking, the affections enjoy the richest feast, and the soul glides into a calm and delightful repose. We seem to want no more, but only the perpetuation and perfection of what we are now enjoying. It produces *tenderness*. We become more cautious and careful, and avoid every thing likely to grieve him, or disturb our enjoyment. We become more watchful over ourselves, and against temptations which may lead us astray. We are more prayerful, spending more time with him alone, pouring out our hearts before him. And this tenderness of conscience, watchfulness of spirit, and prayerfulness of soul, will preserve and keep us from innumerable evils. It awakens *gratitude*—deep and soul stirring gratitude. Such gratitude as inspires us with the strongest confidence, fills us with the warmest love, animates us with glowing zeal, and makes the soul eloquent in his praise. It generates *humility*, deep and adoring humility. Humility, which makes us loveable, and fires us with love to all about us. Humility which fills us with profound admiration of the conduct and condescension of our Lord, and lays us in the dust at his feet. Humility, which inspires us with lofty expectations, of seeing more of his beauty, enjoying more of his presence, and of being ravished always with his love. O the blessedness of finding that lov-

ed One again, and once more enjoying his presence, and the assurance of his love!

Believer, Jesus is not far from thee, when he is not enjoyed by thee. He only stands behind the wall. He is just beyond the watchman. We are not far from finding him, when we feel and lament his absence. He will soon turn again, and have compassion upon us. If therefore you are seeking him, though discouraged for a time, press on, persevere, for you are sure to find him. "Every one that seeketh findeth." The sinner who has never enjoyed his presence, if he seeks will find; and the backslider who has sinned away his presence, shall have it restored again. Seek, seek then, for none can seek his face in vain. When Christ is found, after long seeking, and after deep searching of heart, he is more precious, than as if found at once. We value that most, which costs us most. We enjoy that most which is only gained by much labour and effort. Never does the sun appear so bright, as after the long, cold, dreary night. Never is health so prized, as after a long season of painful sickness. Never is water so sweet, as when the tongue fails for thirst. So, never is Jesus so precious, as after the long night of guilt, gloom, and desertion. Never is Jesus so precious, as after we have suffered from broken bones, a wounded spirit, and a troubled conscience. Never is Jesus so precious, as when the fire of God's wrath

has seemed to dry up our vital moisture, and the fiery law has almost brought us into the dust of death. The trump of Jubilee, was not so sweet to the embarrassed Israelite; the act of emancipation, was never so delightful to the manacled slave; the proclamation of pardon was never so precious to the criminal, who expected to be executed in the morning; as is Jesus to the soul, when he manifests himself once more, after a long dreary season of desertion.

Reader, are you seeking Jesus? Whatever may be thy case, circumstances, or discouragements, never give over until thou hast found him. Find him you will, you *must*, if you seek for him with all your heart. And when you have found him, do not fear to own it, or neglect to acknowledge it, but in the language of the delighted spouse, exclaim, "*I have found him whom my soul loveth!*"

Look from on high, great God, and see
Thy saints lamenting after thee;
We sigh, we languish, and complain;
Revive thy gracious work again.

To-day thy cheering grace impart,
Bind up and heal the broken heart;
Our sins subdue, our souls restore,
And let our foes prevail no more.

EXHORTATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

THE Lord's servants are apt to get disheartened and discouraged. They fancy they are labouring in vain, and spending their strength for nought. They therefore need encouragement, even an apostle did, and therefore we find the Lord speaking to Paul, and saying, "*Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city.*" Acts xviii. 9, 10. We know not where the Lord's people are, but he does. Nor do we know whether we are to be used in converting souls, or whether our word shall turn unto us for a testimony. We know that we have a work to do for God, and we should do it; and if tempted to give way to discouragement, let us listen to,—

THE EXHORTATION. "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace." There may be opposition, persecution, and even death standing in the way, yet should we not fear. Paul was afraid at Corinth, as he tells them

afterwards, "I was with you in weakness, and fear, and much trembling; and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." In Corinth he had to face learning, refinement, and splendour, and he was anxious so to adapt himself to circumstances as to "save some." He was afraid lest by any indiscretion, he "should hinder the gospel of Christ." But fear may become extreme, and hinder instead of help, and therefore the Lord spake to him, and said, "*Fear not.*" "*Be not afraid.*" There was in reality no need for fear. God was with him. God could protect him, and he would. God could bless and render his labours effectual, and he would. Therefore he says, "Speak, and speak out, let them hear the truth, and the whole truth. Speak openly, speak boldly, speak fearlessly; and speak of Christ and of him crucified, as the wisdom of God, the power of God, and the salvation of God. "*Hold not thy peace,* let nothing deter thee, but go on with thy work, until I call thee thence." And mark,—

THE ENCOURAGEMENT. "*I am with thee,*" and if God was with him, he was a match for every foe, and would rise superior to every difficulty. If God be with us, his wisdom will mark out our way and our work; his power will enable us to do his will, and render

our labours efficient; and his care will provide for all our wants, and supply all our needs. "*No man shall set on thee to hurt thee.*" They may hate, gainsay, and attempt to harm us, but without God's leave, they cannot injure a hair of our heads. However wrathful, they are impotent; and the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder thereof he will restrain. "*I have much people in this city.*" What kind of a city was it? One of the most voluptuous, wealthy, and effeminate cities of the east. Here was the temple of Venus, with its degrading and disgraceful services. God's jewels are often found buried in the veriest filth. God's people are picked off the foulest dunghills. In their experience the startling truth is illustrated, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." What kind of persons were they? "Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God: *and such were some of you:* but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." This is the apostle's own reply to the question, and it was in order that they may be washed, sanctified, and justified, that he was to continue there, and boldly preach God's word. Were they

the Lord's, while in such a state? They were, for he said, "*I have*," not "*I will have*," but "*I have much people in this city*." Then the Lord *knew* them, before he called them. He had *chosen* them, before he sent the gospel to them. He *claims* them, before he converts them. He only *accomplishes* by his gospel now, what he had purposed long before. He foreknew, he predestinated, he called, he justified, he glorified. Such is God's order. Such is God's plan.

Observe, *the Lord's people, are often found in the most unlikely places.* Who would have expected to find God's chosen, a multitude of them in a place so foul, so polluted, so degraded as Corinth? *The Lord chooses the most unlikely persons.* Who would ever have thought that the Lord would have chosen fornicators, idolators, adulterers, effeminate, Sodomites, thieves, covetous persons, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners? But he did, as Paul testifies, 1 Cor. vi. 9. 11. Who would have thought that God would have chosen the weak, the base, the despised, and those who are too contemptible to wear a name? And yet he did, as the apostle declares, 1 Cor. i. 27. 29. O the wonders of sovereign grace! O how marvellous the thoughts, purposes, and ways of God! *The Lord calls because he claims.* Those whom God calls by his grace, were chosen to life, redeemed by the blood of Jesus, and predestinated to the adoption of sons. *God's work*

cannot be frustrated. He is never at a loss for means, nor can God's means fail of accomplishing his ends. He says, "I will work:" and he asks, "Who shall hinder?" *Sinners are in God's hand, and he will bound their power, nor permit them to frustrate his designs.* "No man shall set on thee to hurt thee." We are immortal until our work is done. Therefore let us not fear, nor yield to discouragement, but speak, and speak boldly, and expect God to bless our efforts.

In songs of sublime adoration and praise,
  Ye pilgrims! for Sion who press,
Break forth, and extol the great Ancient of days,
  His rich and distinguishing grace.

His love, from eternity fix'd upon you,
  Broke forth and discover'd its flame,
When each with the cords of his kindness he drew,
  And brought you to love his great name.

O had he not pitied the state you were in,
  Your bosoms his love had ne'er felt
You all would have liv'd, would have died too, in sin,
  And sunk with the load of your gilt.

What was there in you that could merit esteem,
  Or give the Creator delight?
'Twas *even so, Father!* you ever must sing,
  Because it seem'd good in thy sight.

'Twas all of thy grace we were brought to obey!
  While others were suffer'd to go
The road which by nature we chose as our way,
  Which leads to the regions of woe.

Then give all the glory to his holy name,
  To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
  And crown him in each of your songs.

THE SABBATH.

God often has to remind us of our mercies, for we are poor, forgetful, and ungrateful creatures. What Israel was, we are. How much the Lord did for them, and yet they forgot him, and ungratefully treated him with contempt. Of this he reminded them in Babylon, when the elders came to Ezekiel to inquire of the Lord, He pointed out their conduct in Egypt, his deliverance of them from the house of bondage, and to aggravate their sin added, "*Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.*" Ezek. xx. 12. The Sabbath was instituted at the creation, when God rested from, and rejoiced in his work; and it was intended for man, as man. But no doubt, they had lost this privilege while they were slaves in Egypt, and therefore it was instituted anew, and made one part of the covenant which the Lord entered into with the people at Horeb, and its observance was a sign, that all might know that they were God's sanctified people.

The Sabbath was a gift, bestowed upon

the people in mercy, that they might rest from labour, serve the Lord, and enjoy his ordinances. It was a sign of God's faithfulness to them, and their obedience to him. It was to teach them his love to them, his care of them, his right to them and all they had, especially of their time, though he only claimed a part. It was to remind them of their deliverance from Egypt, of the promised rest, that God was in covenant with them, that they were reconciled to him, and in friendship with him, and that God had put a difference between them and others. It was in order, that observing it, they may show their love to God, their loyalty to their king, and their concern to please God.

The Sabbath of the Jews was appointed to show that God had separated them from all the nations of the earth, and claimed them for his own. That he had prepared them to be a special people unto himself. That he expected them to be a holy people. That as he had sanctified them, they should glorify him. It was the only command of the ten, that was introduced with a "REMEMBER," because it had been forgotten in their past history, and was liable to be forgotten again. Its observance was strictly required, and the manner of it particularly pointed out. It was binding on the Israelites always, and every where; being part of the law written and engraven on stone, not like other ordinances—on perishing skin, or parchment.

Beloved, the Lord's day is a gift to us. It is a most merciful provision. But for the Lord's day, how little rest would many of the Lord's people have, and how few opportunities of meeting together for worship and fellowship. It is also a sign to us, a sign that Christ has finished his work, and has entered into his rest. Yes, all that Jesus undertook to do, is accomplished, his labours are ended, and he is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Adam kept his sabbath in God's finished work as a creator, in his beautiful and lovely Eden; we are to keep our sabbath on the finished work of Christ as a Redeemer, entering into the holiest by his precious blood. God rested, and man rested, on the first sabbath. Jesus rests, and we rest on the Lord's day. He is at peace with us, and we are at peace with him. We meet together, to honour him, and he meets with us to bless us. We look up to him with longing eyes, and loving hearts; and he looks down on us with complacency and delight. It is to bring before us too, the triumphs of the Lord Jesus. He has not only finished his work, but he has conquered his foes. Satan, death, and hell, are all conquered. The serpent's head is bruised. The grave is perfumed, and left empty. The conqueror is risen, and has ascended to his Father, and our Father, to his God, and our God. It calls upon us therefore to rest: no worldly toil, no money getting, no carnal pleasures

should be attended to on the Lord's day. We should rest, nor only rest, but rejoice. Rejoice that our ransom is paid, our deliverance effected, and our salvation secured. Nor only rejoice, but obey. Obey his precepts, who requires us to meet together for prayer, for praise, for the publication of the gospel, for the administration of his ordinances, and to edify one another. The Lord's day is not appointed that we may slumber on our pillows, take carnal pleasure, indulge in pride, feast the appetite, or take medicine to save loss of time on other days; but that we may serve God, enjoy his ordinances, instruct the ignorant, visit the sick, relieve the poor, and carry out God's purposes of love to the utmost of our power.

Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love,
But there's a nobler rest above;
To that our labouring souls aspire,
With ardent pangs of strong desire.

No more fatigue, no more distress,
Nor sin, nor hell, shall reach the place;
No groans to mingle with the songs
Which warble from immortal tongues.

No rude alarms of raging foes;
No cares to break the long repose;
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon.

Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love,
But there's a nobler rest above;
To that our labouring souls aspire,
With ardent pangs of strong desire.

TRUST IN THE LORD, AND BE SAFE.

How often we are exhorted to trust in the Lord, in his word; and how many precious promises are made to them that trust in him. Our trust, brings the Lord under an obligation, and binds him by his faithfulness, to be gracious unto us. Trust grows out of knowledge, and is one very important form of faith. To trust, is to lean upon, to depend on, or to commit to; if therefore we lean upon the Lord, if we depend on his holy word, if we commit ourselves, and our affairs to the Lord, we shall be safe. . More than once in Scripture the testimony is borne, "*He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*"—PROV. xxx. 5. Happy then, thrice happy, are the people who trust in the Lord!

Our *warrant* to trust in him is found in his word. Some look within, and think if their hearts were tender, if their love was fervent, if their devotion was deep, and if they were certain of their adoption, then they might trust in the Lord. But these things, however they may encourage us, would give us no warrant to trust in God.

His word does that, and his word alone. If he makes a promise, then I may trust, for he is faithful, just, and true. The *occasion* of our trusting him, is found in our own deficiencies, and trying circumstances. I must trust the Lord to do, for I cannot. I must trust in the Lord to provide, for I cannot. I must look to the Lord to appear for me, for he only can still the tempest, conquer my foes, relieve my distresses, or give me peace. The *cause* of our trusting him, is found in the work of the Holy Spirit, and in that alone. Human nature would rather depend on any one than God. Men would rather do any thing, than simply trust in the Lord. Our pride or our fear would be sure to prevent it. If therefore our trust is to be placed in God, if we are to rest ourselves and our concerns on him, if he is to be our sole dependence, then the Holy Spirit must strip us of pride, divest us of our carnal fear, and generate a simple trust in God. Our *encouragements* to trust in the Lord are many, but they principally arise from two sources, the well known character of God, and the testimony of his people. God is true, and may be believed; God is love, and may be applied to; God is faithful, and may be depended on. He cannot deceive us, he will never fail nor forsake us. All his people bear this testimony, that no one ever trusted in the Lord, and was confounded. They all

witness, that trust in the Lord invariably brought deliverance. They all unite to exhort us, to trust in the Lord for ever, because in the Lord Jehovah, there is everlasting strength.

The *privileges* of those who trust in the Lord are many and great, but this is an especial one, "he is a buckler, or a shield, unto them that put their trust in him." This implies exposure to foes,—Satan, evil men, and death, against these we need defence. It implies opposition—and the opposition of our foes is great, daring, and deadly. It implies danger to be apprehended,—because we are weak, timid, and unskilful: and our foes are strong, daring, and experienced. Our safety therefore, stands in what the Lord is to us, he is our shield, and such a shield as no one besides has, or can have. He is omniscient to see all our foes and dangers. He is omnipresent to help us at all times, and against all opposers. He is omnipotent to defend us, and secure us from all evil. He is faithful to fulfil his word, and carry out his engagements. He will *come between* the believer and danger. He will *preserve* the trusting soul from all real injury. He will *protect* the simple Christian every where, and at all times. What a mercy! What an unspeakable privilege is this!

Is the Lord our shield? Are we of those who put their trust in him? Then let us

never give way to fear, but look to him to defend us, remembering that it is said, "Trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before him, God is a refuge for us." Let us call upon him to shield us, seeing we are informed that the Lord is our keeper, the Lord is our shade upon our right hand. Let us trust in him to preserve us, encouraged by the assurance, that as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people for evermore. Let us expect him to protect us, and so doing we shall prove, that they that trust in the Lord, shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. Then may we say, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." O for grace to trust the Lord with all, to trust the Lord for all, and to trust the Lord under all! Holy Spirit, strip us of all confidence in the flesh, of all reliance on man, and of all trust in circumstances; and bring us by thy divine and holy teaching, to trust in the Lord alone! In the name of Jesus, in the word of Jesus, and on the work of Jesus, may we evermore rely and depend. And if tempted to withdraw our trust, or place it elsewhere, may we hear thy sweet reproving voice say, "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord, he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord, he is their

help and their shield." And in reply to all the tempter can suggest, may we say, "My soul trusteth in the Lord, how say ye then to my soul, flee as a bird unto your mountain?"

Away, my unbelieving fear!
Let fear in me no more take place:
My Saviour doth not yet appear;
He hides the brightness of his face:
But shall I therefore let him go,
And basely to the tempter yield?
No, in the strength of Jesus, no!
I never will give up my shield.

Altho' the vine its fruit deny,
Altho' the olive yield no oil,
The withering fig-tree droop and die,
The field illude the tiller's toil—
The empty stall no herd afford—
And perish all the bleating race;
Yet I will triumph in the Lord!
The God of my salvation praise!

Away, each unbelieving fear!
Let fear to cheering hope give place;
My Saviour *will* at length appear,
And show the brightness of his face;
Tho' now my prospects all be cross'd,
My blooming hopes cut off I see;
Still will I in my Jesus trust,
Whose boundless love can reach to me.

"AND ONE CONVERT HIM."

THE apostle supposes that one has erred from the truth, he is not only wrong in head, but wrong in heart. He has wandered out of the way of understanding. Such characters we have all around us. In almost every house, certainly in every alley, street, village, town, and city, there are unconverted souls. Persons who know not God, who love not the Lord Jesus, who are in danger of hell fire. They do not believe it, or do not think of it,—certainly they do not realize it. Now it is our duty to speak to them about it. They are placed near us, that we may teach them, tell them of Jesus, set the gospel before them, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come. They pass and repass us daily, we meet them often, but how do we feel about them? Have we any care about them? Any pity for them? Any desire to see them saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation? Are we willing to make an effort to prevent their eternal destruction? Have we ever made one? How can we satisfy our consciences about them if we never have?

The apostle teaches that souls are to be converted by individual effort. "*And one convert him.*" ONE, not a minister perhaps. Not a Sunday School teacher perhaps. Not a district visitor perhaps. It may not be a learned man, or a wealthy man, or an aged man. No, it may be some loving Christian, who has little wealth, little learning, little spare time, or little apparent influence. One who only just knows the gospel, wishes to honour the Saviour, and sympathises with perishing sinners. God often uses unlikely means to save souls. Indeed, we believe, that God never refuses to use any one, whose heart is right, and who from a right motive, gives himself to the work of saving souls from death.

Oh, what an honour God puts upon us in using us in this great work! What a source of happiness it must be, to know that we have saved a soul from death! The apostle knew this, and therefore he says, "*Let him know*, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Reader, can you see your neighbours, friends, and relatives, perish without an effort to save them? Can you believe that hell is a stern, a dread reality—that the torments of hell are eternal—and that every soul that dies unconverted must endure those torments? And believing this, do you also believe that God saves souls by human instru-

mentality, by the instrumentality of just such persons as yourself? And that a word spoken, with prayer for the blessing of the Holy Spirit, very often accomplishes the momentous work? Can you believe these important truths, and yet day after day, pass sinners and not speak to them? O methinks if we really believed what we profess to believe—if we really felt as we ought to feel, we should pray for perishing sinners without ceasing—and never let a favourable opportunity slip, without a word of warning, a pointed appeal, a loving invitation, or the utterance of some impressive portion of God's holy word. Surely our hearts must be colder than ice, harder than adamant, and more insensible than steel, to allow any one near us to perish without an effort to save him!

Come, sinners, to the Gospel feast;
Let every soul be Jesu's guest,
He bids you come, cast off your fear,
His word invites you, venture near.

Come all ye souls by sin opprest,
Ye restless wanderers after rest;
Ye poor, and maim'd, and halt, and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

Come and partake the Gospel feast,
Be sav'd from sin, in Jesus rest;
The message as from God receive;
Freely to Jesus come and live.

See him set forth before your eyes,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice:
His glorious benefits embrace,
And taste his free, redeeming grace.

THE SINNER AND THE SAVIOUR.

"*Lord, save me.*" So cried Peter, when he was sinking in the waves, and so must every one cry, that desires to be saved from the wrath to come. Peter's situation very well represents the sinner's. He was in the vessel, and was safe. But he was dissatisfied with his position. Without a command, on a bare permission, he left the safety of the vessel, and ventured on the water, the element of destruction. He soon found himself sinking. He cried to his Master, who stretched out his hand and caught him, led him across the waves; and placed him once more in the vessel safe. So the sinner kept not his first estate, but listening to temptation, he ventured in his own strength on forbidden ground, thus he came into imminent danger, and now there is neither help nor hope for him, but in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus can save him from sinking into the bottomless pit, but Jesus only. To the reader of these lines, who in a spiritual sense, is in as great danger as ever Peter was in a physical one, I shall suppose the Saviour, in answer to his cry, proposing seven questions.

"*Do you need to be saved?*" That is, do you really feel that you are lost, ruined, and undone? That if left to yourself your case is desperate, as Peter's on the water would have been? Do you need one to undertake your case and obtain for you pardon, peace, righteousness, holiness, strength, and a title to eternal life? If so, "*Do you desire to be saved?*" That is, do you feel that salvation is the one want of your soul, and do you hunger for it, as the hungry man for food; and thirst for it, as the thirsty man for drink? Do you desire salvation, more than a sick man would desire health, or a poor man gold, or a fettered slave liberty? We never know ourselves to be really lost, until we desire salvation more than life itself. "*Do you believe that I can save you?*" Jesus always requires faith. Do you then believe, that the Lord Jesus can take you just as you are, and procure for you the pardon of all your sins, the justification of your person, the sanctification of your nature, and a title to eternal life? That he can do all this for such a sinner as you are. That he can save you now? "*Are you willing to be saved by me?*" Jesus saves, but only as a favour. He saves the sinner entirely, and claims all the praise and glory. He never helped a sinner to save himself, nor he never will. If you are saved by Christ, you must come to his terms, put yourself into his hands, and

let him save you without money and without price. You must give up all hope in yourself, in anything that you can do, or suffer, or experience, and let Christ save you altother. He must do the work, and while you get the benefit, he must have the praise. "*Do you believe that I am willing to save you?*" Jesus has invited all the weary and heavy laden, all the thirsty, and all of every class and condition who will, to come to him and find rest, refreshment, and salvation: and he has solemnly pledged his word, that he will cast out none that come unto him. Every one that ever came has been received and saved. Greater proof of his willingness to save sinners, he cannot give. Do you then believe that Jesus is willing to save you? He requires you to do so, and if you are willing to be saved by him, he is heartily willing to save you, and to save you *now*. "*If I save you, will you serve me?*" Jesus first saves, and then employs. He wishes to confer on you the greatest favour that he can, and then he wishes you to do what you can for him. The service he requires, is the service of saved souls. Having saved the soul fully, he wishes it to serve him cheerfully. "*Are you prepared to be saved* NOW, *just as you are?*" Jesus never will, never can be more willing to save you, than he is at this moment: and if you are willing to be saved in your present cold, hard-hearted, polluted,

and miserable condition, he is willing to save you. He does not wish you to get better first. He does not wish you to feel fitter for him. He wishes to save you, just as you are now. Better you never will be, until you are saved. Fitter for Christ you never will be, than you are at this moment.

Reader, how is it to be? Do you need salvation? Do you desire to be saved? Do you believe that Jesus can save you? Are you willing to be saved by Jesus? Do you believe that Jesus is willing to save you? If he saves you, will you serve him? Are you willing to be saved *now*, just as you are? If so the matter is settled at once, and in less than five minutes you are saved, and saved for ever. Cast yourself at the feet of Jesus, surrender yourself to Jesus, commit your soul into the hands of Jesus, and you are saved. All things are ready, it is only believe—only venture on Jesus, only confide in his word and work, and you are delivered from the wrath to come. Then, delay no longer, hesitate no more, but at once, and once for all, cast your soul on him and find peace. In vain do you wait for a fitter frame. In vain do you hope to be more prepared for Jesus. He asks nothing of you. He requires nothing from you. He has all, every thing you need, and he bids you come to him and receive. Cry then to him, as Peter did, "*Lord, save me:*" and the hand that

was stretched out to catch Peter, will be stretched out to catch you, and as sure as Peter was safely put on board the vessel, and conveyed to shore, so shall you be interested in the perfect work of Christ, and be conveyed to glory.

Come, weary souls, with sins distrest,
Come, and accept the promis'd rest;
The Saviour's gracious call obey,
And cast your gloomy fears away.

Oppress'd with guilt, a painful load;
O come and spread your woes abroad;
Divine compassion, mighty love,
Will all the painful load remove.

Here mercy's boundless ocean flows
To cleanse your guilt and heal your woes;
Pardon, and life, and endless peace;
How rich the gift! how free the grace!

Lord, we accept with thankful heart,
The hope thy gracious words impart;
We come with trembling, yet rejoice,
And bless the kind inviting voice.

Dear Saviour! let thy powerful love
Confirm our faith, our fears remove;
And sweetly influence every breast,
And guide us to eternal rest.

"LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF."

1 Cor. xi. 28.

There are two extremes apparent among professors of religion, some are always in doubt and fear, never satisfied of their adoption, or for long, rejoicing in their union with Christ: others are satisfied with the slightest evidences, and go on securely making sure that they are right. Such are too secure. To such the apostle would say, "*Examine yourself whether you are in the faith.*" To be always in an unsettled state is wrong, but never to examine ourselves, in order to be sure that we are right, is equally so. Let us for a few moments, attend to this business of self-examination; and we propose three questions—

First, *Into what should we examine?* Into the foundation of our hope, on what we are building for eternity? That we have some foundation, there can be no doubt, but is it God's foundation? That we are resting on something there can be no question, but are we resting on Christ, and on his finished work alone? Have we been stripped of every thing of our own? Have we been

brought away from all dependence on any thing we have done, or can do; any thing we have felt, or can feel? For it is as wrong to build on the work of the Spirit within us, as to build upon works done by us. The person, obedience, and sacrifice of Jesus alone, is the foundation God has laid for us to build our hopes upon. Then from what does our satisfaction and pleasure arise? Does our satisfaction arise from what the Lord Jesus has done for us, and what the Holy Spirit has wrought within us? Or, in other words, Do we feel a solid satisfaction within, arising from the persuasion, that Christ has procured us a title to glory by his obedience unto death; and the Holy Spirit has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light? And, is communion with God, a sense of our acceptance with God, and being actively employed for God, a source of pleasure to us? Again, what do we possess to prove the reality, the vitality of our religion? Have we the life of God in our souls? Does that life aspire to be like God, and urge us to seek deeper and deeper fellowship with God? Have we spiritual light? That light which discovers to us more and more our own depravity, our need of Jesus, and the emptiness and vanity of this present evil world. Have we living faith? The faith which looks to Christ for all, goes to Christ with all, and consecrates the person, his talents, and possessions, en-

tirely to Christ. Have we a good hope through grace? An expectation of sharing with Christ, in all his future glory, simply through free grace. An expectation, raised by the promises, resting on the perfect work of Jesus, and saving us from apostacy and desperation. Have we peace with God? Peace which flows from reconciliation, proves our justification, and prepares us to brave the difficulties, and encounter all the troubles of our earthly pilgrimage. Have we love to God? Love to God for his love to us, for all the blessings he has conferred upon us, and for the bright prospects he has opened before us. Love to God in Christ, for his divine excellencies, pre-eminent beauty, and uncreated glories. Once more, have we the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts? Have we received the Spirit as the Comforter, testifying of Christ unfolding the excellency of Christ, and witnessing to our interest in Christ? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, in some measure, or degree, he is none of his. These then are the points into which we should examine.

Second, *By what should we examine ourselves?* By the word of God, which is the infallible standard of right and wrong. Let us look at the promises, to whom are they addressed? To those, who seek the Lord—who hunger and thirst after righteousness—who mourn in Zion—who are peace-makers—the meek—the poor and needy—who en-

dure temptations—who overcome enemies and oppositions, who are faithful unto death. Look at the descriptions given of the Lord's people. They are a poor and an afflicted people. They thirst for God, for the living God. They live by the faith of the Son of God, they walk by faith, and by faith they stand. They worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. They bear fruits, even the fruits of holiness, and the fruits of the Spirit. Look at the precepts. They do not come up to these, but they approve of them, admire them, and even delight in the law of God after the inward man. We are not to condemn ourselves, if we do not find all the evidences set forth in the word; nor should we rest satisfied, if we do not find any. The work of the Spirit, is a progressive work. Besides which, there are seasons when our evidences are beclouded. At one time, we may be rejoicing in our adoption, and singing on the heights of Zion; at another time, we may be covered with a cloud, and have scarcely one evidence left. There are seasons, when, if it were not said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" we should have no confidence at all. We must not therefore judge hastily or rashly, but examine ourselves cautiously, and carefully, by God's most holy word. This then is the rule of judgment, the light by which we are to examine ourselves.

Third, *When should we examine ourselves?* Before we take it for granted that we are Christians, or appropriate to ourselves the children's property. If we claim to be considered Christians, let it be as the result of a close examination of the state of the heart and life; and of a careful comparing of ourselves with God's word. Before we make a public profession of Christ. If we profess to be Christ's, and publicly take upon ourselves the name of Christ, and identify ourselves with the cause of Christ, we should be prepared to give every one that asketh us, a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness, and with fear. Faith in Christ, is an essential prerequisite to the profession of Christ. So when we come to the Lord's table, we should examine ourselves whether we be his disciples or not; whether we have his yoke on us, his Spirit within us, and can discern his body in the elements set before us. And if laid on the bed of affliction, or tried in any particular way: it is well to search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. When death is in immediate prospect, self-scrutiny is very becoming, that we may be able to rejoice in the Lord, face the foe with dauntless courage, and move onward towards eternity, looking with confidence to Jesus.

Beloved, have you examined yourself? Have you come to a satisfactory conclusion? If so, let not every little trial or doubt, or suspicion, lead you to question your standing.

On the other hand, if there are dark signs, if you can indulge in any sin, if you can allow the lusts of the flesh to reign, or if you can enjoy the world, its pleasures, pursuits, and vanities, we say to you solemnly, "*Examine yourself.*" You are a Christian, or you are not. Every thing depends on the right solution of this question. If in Christ, you will resemble Christ, and are saved by Christ. If you have no resemblance to Christ, you are without Christ, and have neither part nor lot in his salvation.

My God, what inward grief I feel
When impious men transgress thy will
I mourn to hear their lips profane,
Take thy tremendous name in vain.

Does not my soul destest and hate
The sons of malice and deceit?
Those that oppose thy laws and thee
I count them enemies to me.

Lord, search my soul, try every thought;
Tho' my own heart accuse me not
Of walking in a false disguise,
I beg the trial of thine eyes.

Doth secret mischief lurk within?
Do I indulge some unknown sin?
O turn my feet whene'er I stray,
And lead me in thy perfect way.

BEFORE AND AFTER.

BEFORE DEATH, up to the very last moment mercy is offered to the sinner. The Gospel still says, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." The Saviour stands by the dying pillow, saying, "Look unto me, and be saved." God waits to be gracious up to the very last. He delighteth in mercy still. But it is not every one that has a friend to present the gospel, to point to the Saviour, and to encourage the soul to believe. Every one therefore should make sure of mercy while they may. They should seek the Lord while they can find him. The accepted time is NOW. The day of salvation is NOW. There is hope for the vilest NOW. Before death, even from our birth to our death, mercy is offered to us. The mercy of a God. The mercy that will pardon all our sins. The mercy that will make us meet for heaven. The mercy that will give us a title to everlasting life. Reader, God offers that mercy now. Seek him, he will have mercy. Call upon him, he will have mercy. Ask of him eternal life, he will

have mercy, and will save thee with an everlasting salvation.

AFTER DEATH, is the judgment. Then the sinner's doom is fixed. Then the soul's destiny is known. As the tree falls so it must lie. As the sinner dies, so he must remain. During life we sow, after death we reap. In time we may be changed; but in eternity there can be no change. Now we may repent, believe, and be saved; but then there will be no place for repentance, no warrant for faith, no salvation. Before death, mercy reigns; after death, justice deals to every man according to his works. Friend, how is it with you? Have you obtained mercy? Are your sins pardoned? Is your heart right with God? Slight not God's gracious invitations. Neglect not God's great salvation. Do not put from you the offer of mercy. Delay not to seek the Lord, if you have not found him. Trifle not with the solemn concerns of the soul and eternity. Death is often sudden. It comes often when least expected, and cuts those down first whom we thought would stand longest. Think of the wrath to come, and flee from it. Think of the glory that is to be revealed, and secure an interest in it. Think of death, and prepare to meet it. Think of eternity, and make sure of a part in its happiness and pleasures. Remember, O remember, BEFORE DEATH, MERCY IS OFFERED; BUT AFTER DEATH, MAN'S DOOM IS IRREVOCABLY FIXED!

HE IS MORE THAN ALL.

THE old disciple had lived more than fourscore years: he had borne his living testimony for Christ; he was now about to depart to be with Christ. Kind friends and dear children surrounded him, all ready and desirous to shew kindness to him. Without all was quiet, within all was peace. One of his dear ones had come to take a last look, and bid him a last farewell. For the last time she kissed that venerable forehead, and whispered, "*Jesus Christ is all.*" This touched a hidden spring, and seemed to rekindle the spark of life; his eyes opened, and he looked around on all present; they were his earthly treasures; his lips moved, and with an unexpected energy he said, "MORE THAN ALL." This was his dying testimony. He had precious children, and pleasant friends; he had many comforts, and much inward peace, but *Jesus was more than all.* Long had he known him, firmly had he trusted him, sweetly had he enjoyed his presence; occasionally he had suffered for him; now he was about to depart that he might dwell with him; and with his last labouring breath, he can testify *Jesus is "more than all."* More than all the comforts of life, more than all the honours of earth, more than all the attention of friends,

more than children and grandchildren. Yes, yes, *Jesus is more than all.*

Friend, what is Jesus to you? How do you esteem him? What value do you set upon him? What are you prepared to part with for him? Have you ever felt him to be precious to your soul? Did you ever experience the cleansing efficacy of his blood, the healing virtue of his name, the comforting tendeny of his word? Has he delivered your soul from death, your eyes from tears, and your feet from falling? If you know Jesus, so as to trust him; if you trust him, so as to enjoy peace with God; and if the peace of God raises you above the love of life, and the fear of death; you also will be prepared to say, *he is more than all.* David could say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Peter could say, "Lord, we have left all and followed thee." Paul could say, "Yea, doubtless and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." And our venerable friend could say, "*He is more than all.*" O may the Holy Spirit, so reveal Christ to our souls, apply his blood to our consciences, and shed abroad his love in our hearts; that now, while we have health and vigour—that when brought to experience disease and weakness—and then, when we lay our heads on our dying pillows, we may bear this testimony, JESUS IS "MORE THAN ALL."

ON THE DEATH OF MY SON CHARLES.

My dear suffering infant is gone,
To the regions of pleasure and peace;
No more will he struggle and moan,
My Saviour has sent a release.
His poor weary body will rest,
With Mercy and Annie below;
His spirit with liberty blest,
Unspeakable pleasure shall know.

Who knows what sensations divine
He felt, when the struggle was o'er?
Caught up with the ransom'd to shine,
On glory's felicitous shore:
How great the transition must be!
How rapturous the feelings he knew!
The bright gates of glory to see,
And pass as a conqueror through.

He dropped the vile body of clay,
And with it, all sorrow and pain;
Fled swift to the regions of day,
To join with the glorified train.
There, there with the ransomed he sings,
And evermore glorifies God;
Each moment fresh happiness brings,
And all through the Lamb and his blood.

Their song will be evermore new,
Their bliss through eternity run;
The Saviour fresh glories will show,
And the will of Jehovah be done.
They shout the adorable name
Of Jesus, who died to atone,
With vigour and rapture the same,
Before the magnificent throne.

O was I as happy as those
Who live in the presence of God,
Safe housed from all troubles and foes,
No more to smart under the rod:
Was I with my little ones blest,
From sin and perplexity free;
Enjoying the long look'd-for rest,
Where Christ and his people shall be!

My Saviour, thy mercy exert,
For us who are still left below;
Thy grace and thy Spirit impart,
That we to thy pleasure may bow;
Display thy omnipotent grace,
Lay claim to our offspring as thine;
Give each one in glory a place,
To praise thee in transports divine.

Lord, I to thy dealings submit,
I wish that thy will should be mine;
I lay down my soul at thy feet,
And all to thy pleasure resign:
Thy counsel shall guide me below,
Thy promise by faith I believe;
I trust thee to bring me safe through,
And then to thy glory receive.

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